



Daily Report

Central Eurasia

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Baltic Presidents Hold Meeting in Lithuania 25 Mar

*LD2503165594 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian
1500 GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Text] An hour ago, in the Lithuanian town of Palanga, the meeting of the presidents of the Baltic countries—Algirdas Brazauskas, Guntis Ulmanis, and Lennart Meri—began. The Lithuanian president held a lunch for his honored guests. Afterward, the meeting of the three Baltic countries' delegations and the presidents' talks began. During the meeting, they are going to discuss the integration of the Baltic countries into Western European structures, coming closer together with NATO, relations with neighboring states—Russia—and the withdrawal of Russian troops from Latvia and Estonia. Several documents are also due to be signed. The meeting will conclude with a ceremonial dinner.

Discuss Foreign Relations

*LD2503201194 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian
1900 GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Text] The presidents of the three Baltic countries met today in the Lithuanian town of Palanga. As the presidents noted in their concluding communique, the meeting proceeded in a friendly atmosphere of mutual understanding. The leaders of the Baltic countries expressed satisfaction at what the Baltic countries have achieved during the period of closer cooperation that has passed since their last meeting in Tallinn last December. The talks were especially concerned with questions of Baltic relations with the European Union, NATO and other international organizations. An agreement was signed on the creation of the consultative coordinating organ, the Baltic Presidential Council.

After a proposal by Latvia there was also discussion of the higher level of [passage indistinct]

Issue Statement on Talks, Cooperation

*LD2503211494 Vilnius Radio Vilnius in English 2000
GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Text] The three Baltic presidents have issued a joint statement on the extension of mutual and regional cooperation.

The document, signed by Algirdas Brazauskas, Guntis Ulmanis and Lennart Meri at the Palanga summit on Friday, states among other things that cooperation between Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia has developed to a great extent in the past year.

The presidents of the three Baltic states declared their readiness to fully coordinate their activities in strengthening their ties with Europe's political, economic and security structures.

Cooperation between Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia on the one hand and the Visegrad countries on the other will be encouraged and promoted.

The three Baltic leaders expressed hope that the Russian troops will be withdrawn from Latvia and Estonia by the end of this summer as fixed by the timetable earlier.

Baltic Summit Previewed

*WS2503202694 Tallinn BNS in English 1303 GMT
25 Mar 94*

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 25, BNS—Cooperation between the Baltic states develops but "this does not mean that cooperation cannot be improved," Lithuanian President Algirdas Brazauskas said on the eve of his meeting with Estonian and Latvian presidents. The Baltic leaders meet in the Lithuanian seaside resort of Palanga Friday [25 March].

In an interview with the Voice of America and the Latvian newspaper DIENA, Brazauskas said much attention during the summit will be paid to relations of the Baltic states with other countries, including Russia. The three leaders also intend to discuss steps that must be taken to approach the European Union.

Well-informed sources said one of Lithuania's initiatives for the summit is a joint resolution on coordination of actions in international organizations. The Baltic presidents are also expected to discuss the work of embassies and possibilities to create joint Baltic consulates.

Lithuania intends to propose a resolution on cooperation with countries of the Visegrad Treaty, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovakia.

According to the summit's program, the presidents are scheduled to hold trilateral and bilateral meetings.

Leaders View Actions in Europe

*WS2803103794 Tallinn BNS in English 1233 GMT
26 Mar 94*

[Text] Following is the text of the Statement of the Presidents of the Baltic States on Coordination of Actions vis-a-vis EU, NATO, Other International Structures, and in Strengthening Stability in Europe:

[Begin text] We, the Presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania met in Palanga, Lithuania on 25 March 1994, to discuss matters of mutual concern, in particular the integration of the three Baltic States with the economic, political and security structures of Europe.

We discussed our progress achieved to date in developing co-operation among our states in a number of fields. In this context, we noted the results of our Foreign Ministers' meeting in Riga on 23 March 1994, in particular the agreement in principle on the constitution of the Baltic Council of Ministers. We noted with satisfaction that the Free Trade Agreement between our states will come into force on 1 April 1994 and we stressed the importance of continuing negotiations towards supplementing this agreement with a protocol on free trade in agricultural goods.

We also noted the progress made in deepening the cooperation between the Baltic Sea States during the last year. We expressed our conviction that the Council of the Baltic Sea States to be convened under the Estonian chairmanship in Tallinn on 24-25 May 1994 will stress the importance of discussing the establishment of the post of a CSCE High Commissioner on human rights and minority questions and of reaching agreement on international participation in the decommissioning of the Baldish nuclear facility.

We noted that the process of strengthening political and economic relations with the European Union should continue toward the aim of rapidly concluding Free Trade Agreements with the European Union, and expressed the hope that Association (Europe) Agreements would be subsequently concluded as soon as possible, and not later than the end of 1994. In this connection, we noted that associate membership status in the Western European Union would further contribute to security and stability in Europe.

We welcomed the efforts of NATO to strengthen ties with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and asserted that NATO is the main guarantor of security in the Baltic region. We expressed our conviction that increased cooperation with NATO within the Partnership for Peace programme will further enhance security and facilitate the Baltic States integration as full members. In this connection, we stressed the importance of President Clinton recently announced decision to lift the embargo on arms sales to the three Baltic States as a further confirmation of the rapid progress achieved in restoring democratic institutions and instituting market economies in our countries.

We hope that the Stability Pact initiated by the European Union will not only strengthen security and stability in Europe but also contribute to the advancement of the dialogue of the Baltic States with the EU and help us to promote full members of the EU on the same basis as the Visegrad countries and other countries with EU association agreements.

We also stressed the importance of the Ukraine's decision to join NATO's Partnership for Peace and expressed our conviction the Ukraine will play an increasingly important role in ensuring continued stability and security in Europe and especially in the near vicinity of the Baltic Sea region. The recently concluded bilateral agreements signed between the Ukraine and Lithuania and Estonia respectively form a solid basis for further developing relations with the Ukraine in the economic, cultural, political and security fields.

We are reaffirmed our conviction that all Russian forces must be withdrawn from Estonia and Latvia by 31 August 1994. We called on the international community to continue monitoring the situation so that this date would be observed. The Presidents of Estonia and

Lithuania welcomed the agreement on troop withdrawals initiated during the last round of Latvian-Russian negotiations.

We, the Presidents of the three Baltic States, expressed the hope that an agreement on troop withdrawals would be initiated at the upcoming Estonian-Russian round in April.

We stressed the need for international organizations to strictly monitor how the Skrunda radar facility will be utilized, to ensure that there are no negative consequences for those living in the area, that the facility will not be used as a military base, and that it will not compromise the sovereignty of Latvia.

The resolution of these outstanding issues will, we are convinced, stimulate more constructive and fruitful relations with Russia and increase stability and security in the Baltic Sea region. [end text]

View Ties With Nordic, Visegrad Countries

WS2803103494 Tallinn BNS in English 1233 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Following is the text of a statement by the presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania issued in Palanga March 25 under the headline "Statement of Presidents of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania on the Extension of Mutual and Regional Cooperation":

[Begin text] We, Presidents of the Baltic States, having met in Palanga on 25 March, 1994, state with satisfaction that the year 1993 has been effective in institutionalizing the cooperation among the Baltic States. This favorable development should be extended this year. The Baltic States, harmonizing their joint actions and the existing bilateral possibilities will seek coordination in their foreign policy, and in particular in strengthening of ties with the European political, economic, security structures. The Presidents will also initiate close cooperation among the embassies and other diplomatic missions of the three States as well as support joint representation in some States. Our three States strive for closer cooperation with the Nordic States and the formula "5+3" fully meets the interests of the Baltic States. We also fully support the further development of cooperation of the Baltic Sea region.

We stressed the fact that contacts between the Baltic and Visegrad States in the political, economic and security building areas can play a greater role in mutually beneficial cooperation. We express our readiness to intensify the dialogue in all fields and on all levels with a view to facilitating the integration of the Visegrad and the Baltic States into European political, economic and security structures. An important step in this direction will be the conclusion of a free trade agreement between the Baltic and Visegrad countries.

We welcome the initialed Lithuanian-Polish Treaty on Friendly Relations and Good Neighbourly Cooperation. We express our belief that this Treaty and similar

treaties will be a politically significant achievement toward establishing confidence and promoting integration on the European-South axis—between the Baltic and Visegrad countries. [end text]

Agree on Rules for Holding Summits

WS2803103694 Tallinn BNS in English 1233 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Following is the text of the agreement on the summits of the Baltic presidents, signed in Palanga March 25 by the presidents of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania:

[Begin text] 1. The Summits of the Baltic Presidents is the consultative and coordinating body of the Presidents of the Republics of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

2. The objective of the Summits of the Baltic Presidents is to develop closer cooperation and understanding between the Baltic States, and to coordinate their strategies regarding security and foreign policy, as well as other issues that affect their trilateral relations.

3. The work of the Summits of the Baltic Presidents take place during the sessions of the three Presidents, which occur at least twice yearly. These sessions are attended by the staff of the three Presidents and, if necessary, by other invited persons.

4. The time and place of Summits of the Baltic Presidents, which take place on a rotating basis, are determined by agreement between the Presidents and, as a rule, announced at least one month before a session occurs.

5. Between sessions of the Summits of the Baltic Presidents, the offices of the three Presidents coordinate the activities of the Summits, regularly exchanging information about the presidents' foreign visits and documentation pertaining to their activities in the international area (speeches, statements, etc.).

6. Technical preparation of documents relating to the individual Summits of the Baltic Presidents are prepared by the office of the host country, unless agreed otherwise.

Meeting of Baltic Presidents Ends

LD2603121794 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1000 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] A meeting of Presidents Algirdas Brazauskas, Guntis Ulmanis, and Lennart Meri ended in Palanga late last night.

The Baltic states will pay a great deal of attention to relations with the countries of the Visegrad group. This is said in a statement adopted by the presidents during their meeting. This document notes that the presidents are for a dialogue at all levels between the Visegrad and Baltic states and for cooperation in all spheres so that these two regions integrate faster into the political, economic, and security structures in Europe.

At a news conference that took place after the meeting the Estonian President Lennart Meri noted that a new phrase was used for the first time in the meeting: The south-north axis. In this context, there were many discussions on the part played by Ukraine.

Speaking of the forthcoming elections in Ukraine, the Lithuanian president expressed the hope that they will be democratic. Journalists were told by Brazauskas that a great deal of attention was devoted during the meeting to Baltic-Russian relations. The state of Latvian and Russian negotiations was discussed. Brazauskas acquainted his colleagues with the progress of negotiations on the problems of Kaliningrad. Brazauskas also said at the conference that the success of the Estonian-Russian negotiations was one of the aims of our activity.

Latvian President Ulmanis noted that international control of the radar station in Skudra was essential. The statement by the presidents provides for the coordination of the policy of the Baltic states in relation to the European Union, NATO, and other international organizations. The document welcomes NATO endeavors to expand relations with Central and Eastern European states. The presidents affirmed that NATO was the most important guarantor of security in the Baltic region. The presidents also confirmed their conviction that the whole Russian Army must be withdrawn from Estonia and Latvia by 31 August.

The presidents agreed to hold not less than twice per year their regular meetings to discuss pressing Baltic problems.

Today the Estonian and Latvian presidents are leaving Palanga for home. This was a Baltic News Service report.

Chairman of Intergovernmental Council Elected

PM2803124194 Moscow SELSKAYA ZHIZN in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

[Ivan Semykin report: "Agrarian Workers Coordinate Plans"]

[Text] The latest meeting of the Intergovernmental Council for Agro-Industrial Complex Questions, to sum up the results of the council's work in 1993 and coordinate plans for 1994, was held in Barnaul 24 March. Statutes on the council's working group, the interstate scientific and technical center, and the interstate council for questions of agrarian science and information were examined and approved, and the chairman of the Intergovernmental Council on Agro-Industrial Complex Questions for 1994 was elected. A.Kh. Zaveryukha, deputy chairman of the Russian Government, has been elected to this post.

It was deemed advisable for council sessions in 1994 to examine questions of coordinating agrarian policy and creating a common agrarian market, as well as the

problems of coordinating the states' activity in combating diseases and pests affecting agricultural crops and livestock.

ITAR-TASS Carries Press Review for 26 Mar

LD2603071694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0617 GMT 26 Mar 94

["Press Review"—ITAR-TASS headline]

[Text] Moscow March 26 (ITAR-TASS)—The ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI newspaper front-pages an article by Sergey Yushenkov, chairman of the State Duma (lower house of the Russian parliament) committee on defence, beginning with the following words: "Partnership for Peace Is Part of a General Security System".

According to Yushenkov, legislators made two conclusions at parliamentary hearings. "If Russia joins the 'Partnership' programme, it should put forth several conditions which would ease possible negative consequences, and this programme "should be regarded only as part for establishing a more general security system taking into account new realities of the post-cold war era".

The newspaper singles out a statement by Leonid Smirnyagin, a member of the presidential council, saying that "time for explanation of relations between legislative and executive powers has ended".

The country needs a memorandum on civil accord not for the sake of the document itself but for "paving the way for creative work, correcting mistakes of the past and for marching forward", Smirnyagin stresses.

The KRASNAYA ZVEZDA newspaper carries an interview with State Duma speaker Ivan Rybkin, underlining his words that "Russia remains a power, and many will seek to rest on its shoulder in future".

Noting that the inclusion of Russia in the European security system is not to everybody's liking, he calls for not making haste and fuss with this issue. "The same is true of 'the Partnership for Progress' [as received] programme," he adds.

"Russia is not an ordinary participant in international process. Consequently, this circumstance should be reflected in the conditions of the offered partnership," he stresses.

Casting a short retrospective glance into the recent past of Russian leader Boris Yeltsin, the KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA newspaper states that many foreign and Russian news agencies now try to find out whether

the former first secretary of the Sverdlovsk regional committee of the Soviet Communist Party had any chronic ailments.

In this connection, the newspaper writes: "Since the time Yeltsin took the path of war against the state-communist machine and up to this time, the present Russian president is, as specialists claim, in a chronic psychotraumatic situation.

"It is necessary for him to pep up himself with various tranquilisers, which is, after all, recommended to many people at his age." The newspaper quotes Yeltsin's wife as saying that the president "feels quite well. There is no need for speculating on his health".

The TRUD daily prints statements by several specialists and civil aviation pilots concerning the recent crash of an A-310 aerobus in Mezhdurechensk. They concur in the opinion that this tragedy is only a link in the chain of troubles plaguing Aeroflot's utterly destroyed system.

The newspaper notes that the crash "can be the last drop exhausting the government's patience. It looks like that government decisions may follow in the near future. Apart from reorganisation of Aeroflot, they will trigger off reshuffling its entire structure".

The NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA newspaper prints an article by prominent journalist Gleb Pavlovskiy, the author of notorious version no.1 on an alleged state coup in Russia. According to Pavlovskiy, the version is "a routine compilation of open information from news agencies, including, of course, city rumours".

It is pointed out in the article's subtitle that "the author of the scandalous document believes that anybody but he inspired the political hysteria in the upper echelon".

The SOVETSKAYA ROSSIYA daily singles out a statement by political parties and movements from the Orenburg region and the Volga area that "American troops have nothing to do on our soil".

This document was prompted by the fact that a tactical exercise is scheduled for this July at the Totskiy testing-ground in the Orenburg region with the participation of U.S. and Russian troops.

The PRAVDA newspaper features an article outlining theses of the Russian Communist Party central committee for drafting its programme under the headline "new socialism for Russia".

"The crisis of Soviet society," the article says, "was largely preconditioned by the crisis of the communist party of the Soviet Union which was the ruling party for decades".

Kazakhstan President Nazarbayev Arrives in Moscow

*LD2703081994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0740
GMT 27 Mar 94*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Taranov]

[Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan has just arrived here. At Vnukovo Airport he was met by Russian Federation Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Vice-Premier Aleksandr Shokhin.

Nazarbayev's first official visit to the Russian Federation begins on Monday. A package of Russo-Kazakhstan documents are expected to be signed during the visit. The documents will be of great importance for the strengthening of bilateral cooperation.

Experts of the two countries have on the whole completed their work on the drafting of Russo-Kazakhstan documents which are to be signed during the talks, according to a member of the Kazakhstan delegation.

Nazarbayev Reviews Aims of Talks

LD2703122694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1011 GMT 27 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Moscow, 27 Mar—"Kazakhstan and Russia are tied by stable links of friendship and fraternity going back centuries," President Nursultan Nazarbayev of Kazakhstan said in an interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent on his way to Moscow. He said: "The key factors cementing them are a common economy, historical and cultural traditions, and a common mentality." Therefore, Nursultan Nazarbayev emphasized, "nobody will ever manage to sow discord between our peoples. Although such attempts have already been made and are still being made by some irresponsible politicians."

"Take, for instance, the problem of dual citizenship," the Kazakhstan president said. "Many countries, including Russia, do not provide for this. So the question arises: Can this be introduced in Kazakhstan when it is just beginning to construct its statehood and when more than half of its citizens are not native inhabitants? This would put the republic's citizens at a disadvantage at the outset, dividing them into people of first and second class. Would it not be better for everyone to create equal conditions and have everything correspond to the demands of peaceful, world standards, and to make borders transparent by concluding the appropriate inter-governmental agreements? Then, for instance, persons wishing to move to a permanent place of residence in Russia would be automatically given Russian citizenship, and if they return to Kazakhstan, Kazakh citizenship would be given just as freely. If that were to happen, no one would ever again raise the question of the need for dual citizenship."

As to the essence of the forthcoming talks with the Russian Federation president, is concerned, the Kazakh chief of state said the main purpose of the meeting with Boris Yeltsin is to remove the problems which have accumulated in relations between the two countries. Experts have worked throughout the year on ways of resolving many of them and there is no doubt that mutual understanding will be found.

Nursultan Nazarbayev went on to say that the first thing at issue will be military cooperation. He said: "We had a single army, a single weaponry, a single military school, and these ties should not be broken, especially since we are friendly states. In our time we have already reached a relevant agreement on friendship, cooperation, and military aid, and I think normal conditions should be created for the Russian Army to use the military test ranges on Kazakhstan's soil."

"A second problem—Baykonur—should also be resolved, Nursultan Nazarbayev continued. "This is a unique facility, the only one of its kind. I think that tomorrow the Russian side and ourselves will find mutually acceptable conditions for its use in the interests both of Kazakhstan and of the Russian Federation.

All unresolved problems concerning humanitarian links, including civilian ones, must be resolved. People's freedom of movement across the border must be guaranteed. Economic problems must also be resolved; they concern many aspects of our cooperation. We expect over 20 specific documents to be signed here.

Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed, in particular, that he personally would like matters to be conducted in such a way as to ensure that there are never any problems at all in the dialogue between Russia and Kazakhstan. The Kazakhstan president said the two countries are fated, "in the best sense of that word, to be always together. After all, the economies of our republics represent in many ways a single production mechanism. In particular, the world's biggest coalfields in Pavlodar Oblast send most of the fuel they mine to the Russian Federation. Siberia and the Far East provide Kazakhstan with the lion's share of its industrial timber requirements. It is not difficult to imagine what our countries would be deprived of if such reciprocal deliveries were halted. For it would take Russia not just tens of years, but also vast and presently nonexistent resources, to develop its coalfields, just as it would Kazakhstan to grow its forests."

Nursultan Nazarbayev said the exchange of opinions on the "situation in the Commonwealth and on ways to give it a more concrete and effective content will occupy an important place in his conversation with Boris Yeltsin. The fact of the matter is that all the heads of states are already saying that the Commonwealth is necessary, that it is a great future. At the same time, little is being done in practice to strengthen the processes of integration. One wonders how long some political leaders, and not just them, will continue to harbor a panicky fear that the

empire will be revived? It has already been consigned to history. It's time for all to realize that fact once and for all and to begin restoring the economic ties which have been ruptured. Otherwise the economy of our countries will never get out of the crisis."

Says Aim of Visit To Resolve Problems

LD2703093294 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0750 GMT 27 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Moscow, 27 Mar—Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his wife arrived in the capital of the Russian Federation today. He arrived a day earlier than expected, but his talks with Russian Federation President Boris Yeltsin will begin tomorrow, as previously agreed. The Kazakh chief of state intends to prepare himself better for the official part of his visit, and he will begin the appropriate consultations as soon as he arrives in the Kremlin residence set aside for him.

On his way to Moscow, Nursultan Nazarbayev gave an exclusive interview to an ITAR-TASS correspondent. He noted that Kazakhstan and Russia are tied by stable links of friendship and fraternity going back centuries. The president of Kazakhstan said the key factors cementing these links are a common economy, historical and cultural traditions, and a common mentality, therefore nobody will ever manage to sow discord between our peoples, "although such attempts have already been made and are still being made by some irresponsible politicians."

As to the essence of the forthcoming talks, the Kazakh chief of state said the main purpose of the meeting with Boris Yeltsin is to remove the problems which have accumulated in relations between the two countries. Experts have worked throughout the year on ways of resolving many of them, and there is no doubt that a mutual understanding will be found.

Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed in particular that he would like matters to be conducted in such a way that there are never any problems at all in the dialogue between Russia and Kazakhstan. The two sides are fated, in the best sense of that word, to be together always, therefore, the Kazakh president said, how far that succeeds depends to a large extent upon the situation in each of them individually and in the CIS as a whole.

The leader of Kazakhstan also said that the exchange of opinions on the situation in the CIS and on ways to give the Commonwealth a more concrete and effective content will occupy an important place in his conversation with Boris Yeltsin.

Yeltsin, Nazarbayev Begin Talks

LD2803073494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0701 GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov, Anna Melnikova and Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Moscow March 28 TASS—Russian-Kazakh talks began in the Kremlin today with a tete-a-tete conversation between Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev. In an hour they are expected to be joined by official delegations of the two countries, which include Prime Ministers Viktor Chernomyrdin and Sergey Tereshchenko. A large package of Russian-Kazakh documents is expected to be signed on the results of the talks approximately after 12.00.

Yeltsin and Nazarbayev are planning to sign a treaty on military cooperation, a treaty on further deepening of economic cooperation and integration between Kazakhstan and Russia, a treaty on the main principles of the settlement of problems dealing with the civil and legal status of Kazakh citizens living permanently in Russia, and Russian citizens living permanently in Kazakhstan, and an agreement between the two countries on the main principles and terms of the operation of the Baykonur space-launch complex. Some 20 documents are planned to be signed on the level of heads of government. They deal with military and technical cooperation, a peaceful use of atomic energy, cooperation in the sphere of economy, science and culture, as well as legal relationship. A total of 22 documents are expected to be signed on the results of the talks.

Yeltsin Views Kazakh Relations

LD2803160694 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1451 GMT 28 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 59: Compiled by Nikolay Zhrebetsov and Andrey Petrovskiy; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Excerpt] "Time is going forward and demands deeper bilateral relations, better coordination of actions between Russia and Kazakhstan." The statement was made on Monday by President Boris Yeltsin as he opened negotiations between Russian and Kazakh delegations. Earlier he had a one on one meeting with the Kazakh leader Nursultan Nazarbayev.

According to Yeltsin, the meeting helped settle a number of questions that used to be open earlier.

Nevertheless, the signing of agreements was put off from Monday morning to evening.

In the opinion of experts those hours were needed to make amendments in the agreements worked out by the presidents. [passage omitted]

Agreement Reached on Baykonur Leasing Terms

LD2803154194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1456 GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Ivan Ivanov and Anna Melnikova]

[Text] Moscow March 28 TASS—Russia and Kazakhstan agreed on Monday that Russia will lease the

Baykonur space launching site for 20 years with a further prolongation for 10 years and will pay 115 U.S. million dollars a year.

A corresponding agreement was signed today by Presidents Boris Yeltsin and Nursultan Nazarbayev.

Baykonur will be under the Russian sovereignty and jurisdiction, which means that Russians working there will abide by Russian laws. The Russian military-space forces will continue to run the space launching site, according to the agreement.

Russian-Kazakh Military Treaty Outlined

LD2803133894 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1255
GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Gondusov]

[Text] Moscow March 28 TASS—Experts from the Russian Defence Ministry regard the treaty on military cooperation between Russia and Kazakhstan, prepared to be signed by the two presidents, as “necessary and timely”. Specialists called the attention of ITAR-TASS to the main provisions of the treaty. Specifically, it gives definition to the strategic nuclear forces on the territory of Kazakhstan and stresses that a decision of using nuclear weapons will be taken by the Russian president with the agreement of the Kazakh president until their complete elimination.

In the opinion of experts, the provision of the treaty saying that if the security of one of the states is threatened, the other one will render the needed assistance to it, including military assistance, is also very important.

The treaty envisages the division of movable and immovable property on the territory of Kazakhstan between the two defence ministries and defines the status of defence facilities. It also includes provisions on the use of the naval forces of Russia and Kazakhstan in the Caspian Sea in the interests of both countries, on the production, repair and deliveries of armaments and military hardware, etc.

18 Cooperation Agreements Signed

LD2803162294 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1607
GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Ivanov]

[Text] Moscow March 28 TASS—Russia and Kazakhstan signed 18 bilateral agreements on cooperation in Moscow on Monday.

The documents signed by Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and his Kazakh counterpart Sergey Tereshchenko include an agreement on strategic nuclear forces temporarily deployed in Kazakhstan, an agreement on cooperation in the sphere of culture, science and education, an agreement on the dismantlement of a nuclear device at the Semipalatinsk testing site

before its closure, an agreement on terms of operation of field offices of the Central Bank of Russia in Kazakhstan, an agreement on cooperation in training and evaluating top-class scientists, scholars and teachers, an agreement on military and technical cooperation and an agreement on mutual supplies of special materials.

The premiers also signed an agreement on the basic principles of cooperation in the production and selling of uranium, beryllium and tantalum materials, superconductors and hydrofluoric acid, an agreement on cooperation in transportation of special cargoes of the Russian Ministry of Nuclear Power Engineering and the Kazakh Nuclear Power Agency, an agreement on cooperation in the protection of industrial facilities, an agreement on cooperation in preventing industrial accidents, and an agreement on basic principles of the establishment of Russian-Kazakh financial industrial groups.

Members of the Russian and Kazakh governmental delegations also signed an agreement on customs cooperation and mutual assistance, an agreement on industrial, research and development cooperation between defence enterprises, a consular convention and a protocol on consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Russia and Kazakhstan.

Shumeyko, Nazarbayev View CIS Integration

LD2803153594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1453
GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Aleksandrova]

[Text] Moscow March 28 TASS—Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev met with Russian Federation Council Chairman Vladimir Shumeiko in Moscow on Monday to discuss the development of bilateral relations between the two republics and CIS integration.

“It was a very interesting and intensive discussion. It focused mostly on our bilateral relations, but also relations within the Commonwealth of Independent States,” Shumeyko said.

“It is time to raise the question of closer integration within the CIS, perhaps, even the establishment of some supra-national bodies which could transform the Commonwealth into something like a union. Not the kind of union we had before, but a commonwealth preserving the sovereignty and freedom of all member states,” Shumeyko said.

The two leaders also discussed problems of citizenship, non-payment crisis and other issues. “Our points of view on bilateral relations coincided almost 100 per cent,” Shumeyko concluded.

Grachev: 'More Cooperation' Sought With NATO*LD2503191794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1713
GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Text] Russia regards the NATO program Partnership for Peace as a phase in the establishment of a new collective defense system in Europe. Russian Defense Minister, Pavel Grachev, emphasized at a meeting of the military command in Moscow on Friday [25 March].

Grachev said Russia did not intend to integrate with NATO military structures but would seek more cooperation with the alliance.

Speaking on the participation of Russia in the NATO program, Grachev stated that Russia would seek the appropriate status for itself according to its position and role. He stressed that any attempts to resolve European problems would have no future without Russia.

Development of the Russian Armed Forces during the first three months of this year was considered at the meeting. The military command also discussed issues concerning military and mobilization preparations of the army, accommodation of Russian servicemen withdrawn from other states and financing of the Armed Forces.

The Russian Defense Ministry's board will meet in Moscow on March 26 to discuss issues on the levy.

Churkin Backs 'Partnership for Peace'*LD2503175994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1654
GMT 25 Mar 94*

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow March 25 TASS—Deputy Russian Foreign Minister Vitaliy Churkin backed Russian participation in the Partnership for Peace program today at the State Duma after being informed of the results of parliamentary hearings on the issue.

In his words, the Russian possible signing of a corresponding framework agreement will not infringe Russian interests but help to enhance Russian influence on many foreign political processes in Europe and throughout the world.

The deputy foreign minister stressed that Russian-NATO contacts within the Partnership for Peace framework will not hamper comprehensive cooperation with Commonwealth states, which are of special interest for Russia.

Deputy Secretary of the Russian Security Council Valeriy Manilov said that the Russian adoption of the Partnership for Peace program has not been "directly" discussed at the Security Council, but will be considered as part of Russian foreign political activities at the next council meeting.

He said that Russian participation in the program is a "compromise between supporters and opponents of NATO expansion". A refusal from this partnership may result in Russian political isolation on the European continent. Manilov described the program as a "door to European collective security".

First Deputy Defence Minister Andrey Kokoshin told the Duma meeting that the NATO program carries no threat to Russian interests. He stressed that Russia, being a great power, carries a special responsibility and special obligations on the upkeep of universal peace and stability.

The State Duma will return to the discussion of Russian participation in the Partnership for Peace program at the next stage of parliamentary hearings on the issue.

Zhirinovskiy Cautions Neighbors on Joining NATO*LD2503210694 Lisbon RTP Internacional Television in
Portuguese 1900 GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Passages contained within quotation marks are recorded in Russian, fading into Portuguese translation]

[Text] Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the leader of the Russian far right, has threatened the West with a third world war should NATO open its doors to countries of the former Soviet Union. Zhirinovskiy made the above statement today in an exclusive interview to RTP's "Common House" program.

[Zhirinovskiy] "Eastern European leaders believe they will receive supplementary aid just because they will become members of NATO. They will get nothing from NATO. Instead, they will polish the boots of German and American officers. That is what the Polish, the Hungarians, the Czechs and Slovaks will get. The Bulgarians will polish the boots of Turkish officers."

Zhirinovskiy also threatened the West with a third world war if NATO opens its doors to former Soviet Union republics:

[Zhirinovskiy] "If you do not want war, do not let any Russian neighbor in. These territories are vital to us, Russia. The Baltic states, Belarus, Ukraine, the Caucasus and Central Asia. If you try to include these countries in NATO, you will be responsible for the third world war, from which only Russia will come out as a winner as it did in the second world war."

U.S. Seen Not in Hurry To Lift Trade Barriers*PM2803122394 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26
Mar 94 p 2*

[Aleksandr Shalnev report: "Bashful but Rich Pioneers From the United States To Visit Russia"]

[Text] It will be possible to judge to a certain degree just how ready the United States is to support reforms in

Russia, not so much with words as with deeds, from the results of the mission on which an unusually impressive delegation of U.S. businessmen, headed by Secretary of Commerce Ron Brown, arrives in our country Monday, 28 March.

The list of delegation members reads almost like a "Who's Who in the U.S. Business World": presidents and chairmen of major corporations like Westinghouse Electric, General Electric Aircraft Engines, Dresser Industries, Texaco, and so forth.

In his parting address to the delegation—which is to visit St. Petersburg and Yekaterinburg in addition to Moscow—the U.S. President stressed that "a Russian economy moving toward the market is vitally necessary for the economic security of the United States and the world as a whole."

There have already been similar visits to Russia, albeit not on such a scale. But they proved virtually fruitless: Neither an active influx of capital, nor impressive joint projects, nor qualitative development in bilateral trade ensued.

It is perfectly obviously that, even if accords are achieved also on this occasion, it cannot be ruled out that many of them will be left hanging—if only because of the numerous restrictions which are still being maintained in trade and business relations between our countries to this day, and which Washington is not in any particular hurry to revoke, thereby blocking our products' access to Russian markets. Ultimately, the lifting of these restrictions depends less on U.S. businessmen than on the U.S. Government.

Well, the main thing of course, is investments: A tough decision is required from the Americans on whether they are prepared to invest money—and considerable sums at that—in our economy, or whether they prefer to continue waiting for something. Sometimes the impression arises that the spirit of pioneering and risk—which, in point of fact, paved the path to the prosperity and success of America itself—has now seemingly been lost. U.S. businessmen, it seems, are waiting for almost ideal, hothouse conditions to be created for them in Russia.

Kozyrev Holds Talks With Norwegian Counterpart

LD2603120094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1050 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS special correspondents Vasilii Belousov and Dmitriy Gorokhov]

[Text] Murmansk, 26 Mar—"One of the most promising regions of Russia and the nearest foreign parts in relation to Norway." This is how Andrey Kozyrev defined the choice of Murmansk as the venue for the meeting of the heads of the foreign policy departments of Russia and Norway. His talks with his Norwegian colleague Bjorn Tore Godal have only just begun in the modern hotel

outside town called "Ogni Murmansk." The ministers are exchanging opinions on international issues and have touched upon a broad circle of subjects of regional partnership.

Further on Meeting in Murmansk

LD2503210094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1329 GMT 25 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Yuriy Kozlov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—It has fallen to the lot of Murmansk, which is situated beyond the polar circle, to be the venue of the "first date" which the foreign minister of the Russian Federation, Andrey Kozyrev, will have with the new head of the Norwegian foreign policy department, Bjorn Tore Godal. Their talks will take place on 26 March there and they will become an original Russian debut for the Norwegian minister in his present role. [passage omitted] On the eve of his visit in an exclusive interview with an ITAR-TASS correspondent in Oslo, Bjorn Tore Godal said it was particularly important that the meeting with the Russian foreign minister would take place in Murmansk since Norway attaches great importance to bilateral cooperation not only at state level but at regional level as well. "The program of action with regard to Eastern Europe" drawn up by the Norwegian Government gives priority to the Russian northwestern regions. The increased activity of the council for cooperation in the region of the Barents Sea also opens wide prospects.

One should admit that the environmental situation in northern Europe at present is causing well nigh the greatest concern of the Norwegian public since the region is very vulnerable in this sense. The closeness of powerful nuclear arsenal of the ships of the Russian Northern Fleet hardly adds to the optimism of the Norwegians as regards ensuring ecological safety.

The fact of Russian military presence at NATO's northern flank is an objective reality. In this connection the Norwegians pin great hopes on establishing the spirit of openness and partnership in relations between the East and the West in the military and political sphere. The readiness to join the Partnership for Peace program announced by Russia and the current joint exercises in the Barents Sea with the "Pomor" code name give evidence to the fact that these expectations are justified.

The real contents and expanding range of the Russian-Norwegian cooperation predetermine the intensity of personal contacts between the foreign ministers of the two countries. One can have no doubts: the Murmansk meeting will be followed by other meetings. The more successful the present start in Murmansk is, the more often these meetings will be.

Kozyrev, Godal End Talks

LD2603185994 Moscow *ITAR-TASS in English* 1840
GMT 26 Mar 94

[By *ITAR-TASS* special correspondents Vasilii Belousov and Dmitriy Gorokhov]

[Text] Murmansk March 26 TASS—Russia is striving for full-scale cooperation with the European Union, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev told correspondents here today upon the completion of his Murmansk negotiations with Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjorn Tore Godal.

The minister said they are working on a major agreement with the European Union.

Kozyrev welcomed the upcoming Norwegian joining of the European Union and expressed the hope this will help to attract European Union's investments in development of the Barents Sea area and the Murmansk region. He said Russia will benefit from Norwegian joining of the European Union, as Russian-Norwegian relations are perfect. "The better our neighbours live the better we will live," said Kozyrev.

Norway welcomes Russian constructive contribution in solution of world problems, including its initiative on settlement around Sarajevo, Norwegian Foreign Minister Bjorn Tore Godal told correspondents in his turn.

The minister was on a brief visit to the major city of the extreme north at the invitation of his Russian counterpart. Bjorn Tore Godal, recently nominated foreign minister, described his first meeting with Andrey Kozyrev as important and fruitful.

He said they managed to discuss bilateral cooperation in the Barents Sea area in view of broader European prospect and dwell on many aspects of bilateral and regional interaction.

Europe does not need new lines of delimitation, it is necessary to consolidate contacts in the security sphere, stressed the Norwegian minister. He welcomed the Russian intention to sign the NATO Partnership for Peace program in the near future.

The Norwegian official said that the negotiations discussed Russian relations with the European Union, which the sides plan to regulate by a special agreement.

On the same day Bjorn Tore Godal left Murmansk for Norway.

Peacekeeping Force Exercise in Tajikistan Cited

PM2503100594 Moscow *KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian* 25 Mar 94 p 1

[Aleksandr Pelts report: "Exercises Are Not a Show of Strength. Our Correspondent Reports From Tajikistan"]

[Text] Army General Pavel Grachev, Russian minister of defense, has visited the area where the Collective Peacekeeping Forces [CPF] and Russian Border Guards serving on the Tajik-Afghan border are conducting exercises. On arrival in the exercise area he joined the Uzbek and Tajik defense ministers and the Republic of Tajikistan leaders attending the exercises to hear a report by Colonel General Boris Pyankov, commander of the CPF in Tajikistan, who is in charge of the exercises.

The exercise schedule first involved halting an "attacking enemy grouping" jointly with border guard defenders. A defensive engagement was conducted in collaboration with the air force and artillery and tank subunits. Over 1,000 targets, along with around 60 decoys, were set up on the battlefield for the air force and artillery. According to plan the attacking enemy first came under fire from three artillery batteries, three mortar batteries, and three "Uragan" rocket-launcher batteries. The ground forces' operations had helicopter support.

Once the "enemy" had been halted, it was subjected to a 20-minute bombardment involving all forces and means of firepower. In addition, helicopters dropped a reinforced company by parachute into an area of possible "enemy" breakthrough. Then came a counterattack with the support of artillery subunits and ground-attack aviation.

In the course of the exercises their commander, Col. Gen. Boris Pyankov, commented on the actions of the CPF, who demonstrated high combat teamwork and coordination, staunchness in defense, and swiftness in offense.

At the end of the exercises the defense minister emphasized that the troops' actions merited an overall high assessment. On the basis of observers' reports, artillery and mortar subunits received an excellent rating. The rest were rated "good." It must be stressed that the exercises involved long-range aviation, ground-attack aircraft, and fighters, which provided the area with air cover. Observers report that over 50 percent of the targets, around 100 of which were mobile, were hit during the exercises.

The thorough engineering preparation of the exercise area must be pointed out. Within a short space of time the troops equipped a defense area and fully prepared the training zone. Army Gen. Pavel Grachev pointed to the increased proficiency of the Russian troops and the Uzbek and Tajik troop subunits. He once again underlined that these exercises were planned and are in no way connected with a show of strength, a charge that people are trying to level at the CPF. After the exercises he thanked all the personnel who took part in the exercises, handed out orders and medals, and also issued an order awarding early promotions to a large number of officers. Pavel Grachev then went to Parkharskiy Rayon, where an epidemic of toxipathic hepatitis broke out in 1993. He gave doctors there 5,000 disposable syringes and met

with local residents, who thanked Russia's defense minister for his attention and concern.

'Concern' Expressed Over Georgian-Abkhaz Situation

LD2603133994 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1200 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] The Russian Government has expressed its deep concern at developments in the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict zone. An appeal to the leaderships of Georgia and Abkhazia, which was issued on Saturday [26 March] through Foreign Ministry channels, expresses the hope that both sides involved in the conflict will not allow the resumption of bloodshed and will remove obstacles in the way of negotiations.

A few days ago the Georgian leadership requested the Russian president and defense minister step up their efforts to settle the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict. Otherwise, Eduard Shevardnadze said speaking on Georgian television, events in Abkhazia may become uncontrollable and a fresh escalation of the conflict unavoidable.

Today's appeal by the Russian Government expresses a readiness to redouble its efforts to help the opposing sides achieve mutually acceptable accords.

Vorontsov Addresses UN on Georgia-Abkhazia Conflict

LD2603103094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 0134 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Sitnikov]

[Excerpt] United Nations, 26 Mar—[Passage omitted: The UN Security Council has passed a resolution calling for the Georgian-Abkhaz conflict to be resolved peacefully]

Speaking at the session, Yuliy Vorontsov, the Russian permanent representative at the United Nations, noted that on 21 March the Government of Georgia had expressed its readiness to: Broaden the political and legal status of Abkhazia and, with the aim of giving this status real content, to delimit the competencies between the bodies of state administration of the Republic of Georgia and Abkhazia, including investing the latter with exclusive powers. This position adopted by Georgia is an important prerequisite for success at the talks, Yu. Vorontsov stated.

The Russian representative also went on to point out the importance of both sides' having before them the prospect for the institution of a UN peace-keeping operation, which both the Georgian and the Abkhaz sides urgently requested.

Paratroop Commander on Forces' Role in Bosnia

PM2503205994 Moscow KRSNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p2

[Aleksandr Oliynik report: "'Blue Helmets' Make For Bosnia. Reinforcements for 2d Russian UN Battalion"]

[Text] An advance detachment of Russian "Blue Helmets" set off from Ryazan by a military aviation aircraft 25 March. It will reinforce the personnel of the 2d Russian battalion which is part of the UN peacekeeping forces on the territory of Bosnia-Herzegovina where, once the Russians arrived, it became possible to conclude the long-awaited peace between the warring sides.

The dispatch of an additional contingent from the Russian Army to Sarajevo with equipment and weapons, Colonel General Yevgeniy Podkolzin, commander of the Airborne Troops, said in a conversation with your KRSNAYA ZVEZDA correspondent, is being effected with the knowledge and agreement of the UN Security Council. This concerns an additional military contingent of our "blue helmets" numbering 300 men, which has been allocated by a directive of the Russian president and with the agreement of the Federation Council in response to a request from Secretary General Butrus-Ghali to participate in conducting peacekeeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

As the Airborne Troops commander stressed, the presence of Russian paratroopers from the UN peacekeeping forces is a key aspect in the implementation of the plan for the political settlement of the Bosnian crisis, put forward by Russia in the second half of February. But recently, after Russian paratroopers mounted posts on demarcation lines and the collection points of Serbian heavy guns which have been transferred under control of UN forces, and when mutual cooperation between the UN and Serbian commands was established, as is clear from reports coming into the Foreign Ministry and reports from Colonel Viktor Vorobyev, commander of the battalion, the command of the UN forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina is making attempts to change the original task for our UN battalion. The question of giving it appropriate peacekeeping status is deliberately being dragged out, which is making it possible to put the Russians in the UN reserve.

At present, the commander of the Airborne Troops reported, our paratroopers have left a key post across the River Miljacka, as well as several posts on a likely avenue of tank approach in the Serb area of Grbavica. The Russians' positions have been occupied by French "Blue Helmets," which is a violation of the treaty with the Serb side, and may lead to an escalation of tension in this area which is explosive as it is. Obviously, Col. Gen. Podkolzin noted, bringing Russian peacekeeping forces into Sarajevo, and reinforcing them by 300 servicemen, the first detachment of whom is now being sent to Bosnia, and also our intention to send military observers to the area of the airport of the city of Tuzla, is

generating concern in the West that Russia has taken on an excessively active role in settling the crisis in the Balkans.

Nevertheless, the commander of the Airborne Troops said in conclusion, in accordance with the political settlement plan, we are continuing to send our "Blue Helmets" to Sarajevo. Today's landing party comprises 100 servicemen: 59 officers and warrant officers, and the rest—noncommissioned officers and soldiers who have performed their compulsory service in the Airborne Troops and have concluded contracts with the Ministry of Defense.

...An inspection of the "Blue Helmets" was carried out on the airfield near Ryazan. It was conducted by Major General Nikolay Staskov, deputy commander of the Airborne Troops for the Peacekeeping Forces. For the first time, before the departure of the "blue helmets," a blessing ceremony was carried out which was conducted by clergy from the Orthodox and Islamic faiths (those going to Bosnia include Muslim soldiers).

Russian Peacekeepers Arrive in Zagreb

LD2503184194 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1706 GMT 25 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Andrey Naryshkin]

[Text] Zagreb, 25 Mar—Today, a contingent of 100 Russian paratroops arrived at the Croatian capital's airport from Ryazan, accompanied by a back-up group. On Saturday [26 March], it will be transferred to Sarajevo on two UN peacekeepers' aircraft to reinforce the Russian element of the "blue helmets."

The back-up group includes a representative of the Russian Federation president, senior officers of the General Staff of Russia's Armed Forces, and of the airborne forces and diplomats. As Major General Nikolay Stasko, the head of the group and deputy commander of the Russian Federation airborne forces, told an ITAR-TASS correspondent, its mission includes settling issues linked to the status and tasks of the Russian peacekeeping contingent in Sarajevo. The fact was, he explained, that the UN Secretariat had yet to grant the Russian unit the status of a fully-fledged battalion of peacekeeping forces and was using it as a reserve element. The Russian soldiers and diplomats intend to discuss this matter with General Michael Rose, the commander of UN forces in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

The airborne company that arrived includes soldiers of 10 nationalities and various religious persuasions. They include a Muslim platoon that is to serve in the Serbian sector of Sarajevo.

U.S. Procrastination Threatens Relations With Ukraine

LD2503193294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1718 GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: Reports by Diplomatic Correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboinikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy, and others]

[Text] On Friday, chief Vladislav Petrov of the press service of the Russian Ministry of Nuclear Power Production said the Russian and Ukrainian governments had already discussed the link between the delivery of Russian fuel to the Ukrainian nuclear power plants and the withdrawal of nuclear ammunition from Ukrainian territory.

According to Petrov, the United States was still waiting to meet its pledges under the Russian-US-Ukrainian memorandum which was signed early this year, during President Clinton's visit to Moscow. The United States pledged to foot bills for the production of nuclear fuel in Russia whereas Russia pledged to deliver the fuel to Ukraine.

The absence of the promised money could put off the delivery of fuel to Ukraine. The transfer of the nuclear ammunition from Ukraine to Russia, where it is to be turned into fuel, would take fairly long.

Earlier this week Ukrainian officials, including Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko and Defense Minister Vitaliy Radetskyy indicated that Kiev could reconsider the schedule of the transfer of the nuclear ammunition to Russia if Moscow failed to deliver fuel to the Ukrainian power plants.

In Petrov's view, procrastination, on the part of the United States, could provoke a new crisis in Russian-Ukrainian relations.

The United States would meet its pledges. So would Russia. But it remained unclear, said Petrov, why Kiev was apt to offer highly emotional response to purely technical problems.

Border Guard Agreement Signed With Poland

LD2603195094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1258 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Valeriy Biryukov, Anatoliy Yurkin]

[Text] Kaliningrad, 26 Mar—Russia and Poland today signed a bilateral agreement on comprehensive cooperation by their border guards against organized crime.

"This Russian-Polish agreement is just the first step towards creating an all-encompassing system to counter organized crime in Europe," the commander in chief of

Russia's border guards and head of the Russian delegation, Andrey Nikolayev, told a news conference afterwards. "So far this has been done at regional level, but in the very near future we intend to conclude similar agreements with our counterparts from Lithuania and Belarus, and Poland is also willing to join them. After that, there should be an agreement at overall, pan-European level."

It was stressed at the news conference that while becoming an obstacle to criminal gangs, the Russian-Polish border should remain as open as possible for economic and cultural cooperation between the two states.

German Defense Minister Visits St. Petersburg

LD2703092394 Berlin DDP/ADN in German 0540
GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] St. Petersburg (DDP/ADN)—Defense Minister Volker Ruehe has spoken in favor of even stronger links between Russia and Europe. "The West needs Russia as a partner capable of action in political, economic, and strategic terms," Ruehe stressed in St. Petersburg at the weekend. A stable Russia is in the interest of both Germany and Europe as a whole. The West will therefore continue to support the "political, economic, social, and military rebuilding process" in the country. However, Russia must create the conditions for the success of the reforms itself.

German-Russian relations have always been particularly important, Ruehe underscored. The friendship between the two countries is an important pillar of present stability and the future security order in Europe. The further deepening of relations, also in the military sphere, is a contribution to "transparency and predictability" on the continent.

Ruehe is attending a meeting of the "Bergedorfer discussion round" in St. Petersburg. The association was set up around 30 years ago in Bergedorf near Hamburg. Politicians, military representatives, scientists, and representatives from organizations from Europe and American are taking part.

Foreign Ministry: Iraq 'Should Be Given A Chance'

LD2503191294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1718
GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: By Diplomatic correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porschnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy, and others]

[Text] The international sanctions against Iraq could be softened and later lifted if Iraq "stated in clear and unequivocal terms that it recognized the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of Kuwait and accepted a marked Iraq-Kuwait border," a highly placed official in the Russian Foreign Ministry told Interfax.

He said that the Iraqis insisted that they were honoring the disarmament conditions of UN Security Council Resolution 687. "For the Kuwaitis, however, Iraq's disarmament is less important than its abandonment of plans to take over Kuwait. This approach is quite reasonable," the official said.

He also said that the UN Security Council discussed the extension of sanctions every two months. "The Security Council chairman stated recently that the Council decided to keep the sanctions in place. This time, incidentally, there was no question of lifting or alleviating the sanctions (lifting the oil embargo—IF). We thought that the Security Council chairman's statement could be read as admission that positive changes could be detected in the Baghdad's activities which suggested its intention to comply with what the international community wanted. Iraq had taken steps to implement the Security Council resolutions on destruction of missiles and other weapons."

According to the diplomat, "Russia wanted a certain test period to be imposed on Iraq. UN Security Council resolution 715 enables imposing a long-term monitoring. Certain installations could be subjected to an extended technical and visual supervision under that resolution. Russia wanted to give Iraq, say, six months. If all disarmament conditions of resolution 687 were met during that time, then, in compliance with item 22 of that resolution the issue of lifting the oil embargo could be raised."

The diplomat said, "Iraq must comply with all UN Security Council Resolutions. But Iraq should be given a chance to see light at the end of the tunnel."

Official Argues Russia Needs Kuril Islands

LD2503105094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 0331
GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Russia "will cease to be a maritime power" if it transfers the South Kurils to Japan, Chairman of the Committee on Geopolitics Viktor Ustinov (Liberal Democratic Party of Russia) told a news conference in the State Duma Thursday.

If the islands are transferred to Japan, "there will be no need for us to keep the Pacific Fleet, because it will have no access to the ocean," Ustinov believes. In his opinion, Russia has virtually lost the Baltic and the Black Sea Fleets. The possibilities of the Northern Fleet have been considerably reduced.

Ustinov suggested that the withdrawal of an aviation regiment from the South Kurils shows that "some politicians continue to pursue the aim of playing 'the Kuril card' and selling the islands to Japan."

The press conference heard the concepts of the State Duma committees on geopolitics and security regarding state borders. Chairman of the State Duma Committee on Security Viktor Ilyukhin believes that normal border

demarcation would take 5-7 years and cost two to three Russian annual budgets. In this connection, he believes that the CIS countries should have a single external border and single border troops. And technically they should reinforce only the border with the Baltic states. Ilyukhin is convinced that the internal borders between CIS countries should only be concerned with hygiene control.

DPRK, U.S., Russian Views on Korea Crisis Eyed

PM2803114194 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 94 First Edition p 6

[Aleksandr Krasulin report: "Pyongyang Intends No Concessions"]

[Text] The U.S. statement on the holding of the "Team Spirit '94" military exercises with South Korea, the rejection of a third round of talks with the DPRK on nuclear security on the Korean Peninsula, and the intention to submit for consideration by the UN Security Council a resolution on economic sanctions against North Korea if its authorities do not allow the International Atomic Energy Authority [IAEA] to carry out a repeat full inspection of nuclear facilities and refuse to exchange special envoys between North and South have been assessed in Pyongyang as an attempt to exert blatant pressure. This was said in a 21 March DPRK Foreign Ministry statement, whose contents were announced to journalists Tuesday by Son Song-pil, DPRK ambassador in Moscow.

The document notes in particular that, in its demands, the United States has gone considerably beyond the bounds of the New York accords of 25 February and is "proceeding on the basis of its former policy of a hostile attitude toward Korea"; the failed IAEA inspection is being used as a pretext to "isolate and stifle the DPRK."

The ambassador also announced that under the complex conditions of holding an extraordinary inspection of nuclear facilities, the Korean authorities did everything possible to make it a success. As for the analysis samples which IAEA specialists failed to obtain from one laboratory, the Korean side gives an assurance that the agency's control instruments installed during a previous inspection are still there, and the IAEA seals have not been broken.

He stressed that, since the United States and the IAEA are using the results of the inspection to exert pressure on the republic, the DPRK no longer considers it "its duty to provide uninterrupted guarantees for the IAEA." "We will not be making any unilateral concessions, and if Washington takes tough measures we will be forced to respond appropriately. We are still ready for a dialogue, but if the United States chooses a military way to solve the problem, we will respond in kind," Son Song-pil stressed. "In this complex situation America should make a more realistic assessment of the possible consequences."

The ambassador warned of the danger which could be posed by the ending of the negotiating process. In this event the DPRK would be forced to carry out the government decision—currently in abeyance—to withdraw from the Nonproliferation Treaty. This, in his opinion, could lead to the galvanization of nuclear developments in a number of other countries, which are already near-nuclear-capable, and, as a result, to the breakdown of the entire system of nuclear arms control.

It seems as though the United States is not ruling out the possible use of military force in the Korean question. THE WASHINGTON POST reports that, apart from the plans to increase the U.S. military contingent and to deploy another 48 Patriot surface-to-air missile systems in South Korea, it is also planned to redeploy USN aircraft carriers closer to the Korean seaboard.

At the same time, the United States is trying to find UN allies to support its policy in regard to Pyongyang. Naturally, without the help of Japan, China, and Russia, any restrictive measures would be ineffective. On Monday, Albright, U.S. representative to the United Nations, met with delegates from the UN Security Council countries. A draft resolution calling on North Korea to agree to all the IAEA inspectors' demands was discussed, and soundings were taken on the attitude of Britain, France, Russia, and China toward sanctions against Pyongyang. According to Radio Liberty, Russia and Britain supported the U.S. position. France opposed tough measures, and China abstained. We would recall that each Security Council member has the right of veto—consequently, the agreement of all of the "big five" is needed for sanctions to be imposed.

In the opinion of Professor James Morley of Columbia University, the Security Council members may be able to draft a resolution in general terms, but they are unlikely to reach a unanimous view on the use of sanctions. It is hard to imagine, he stated in an interview with a Radio Liberty correspondent, that China, Japan, and even South Korea would agree to military action. Clearly, Russia would give its verbal assent to the resolution, but would hardly want to get involved in military operations.

The leaders of the Russian foreign policy department are themselves being quite restrained in their statements on the subject of Korea. Thus, commenting on recent talks with Japanese Foreign Minister Tsutomu Hata, Aleksandr Panov, Russian Federation deputy foreign minister, stated that "both sides consider it necessary to maintain permanent contact, to continue talks on the DPRK nuclear problem, and, possibly, to seek some new approaches, since current approaches have proved insufficiently effective."

Western observers are in practice failing to take account of the Treaty of Friendship and Mutual Aid between the DPRK and Russia, to which the latter is party as the successor to the former USSR. At the same time, they are not ruling out the possibility that the Russian Federation

may adopt some kind of independent stance on this issue, as was the case recently on Sarajevo.

Judging by everything, Washington does not expect any immediate exacerbation of the situation on the Korean

Peninsula. Confirmation of this was the Pentagon decision to send the Patriot systems by sea rather than by air. The idea is that this will not only allow Washington to defuse the political tension with respect to this step, but will clearly also give the DPRK time to review its position vis-a-vis a full inspection.

Political Issues

Yeltsin Interviewed in Sochi 26 Mar

PM2503171594 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 26 Mar 94 pp 1-2

["Transcript" of 25 March telephone interview with Russian President Boris Yeltsin by IZVESTIYA Chief Editor I. Golembiovskiy: "Boris Yeltsin: Passions Must Not Be Further Intensified. Russian President Speaks on Telephone With IZVESTIYA Chief Editor"]

[Text] On the morning of 25 March the editorial office telephoned Sochi, where the Russian president is completing his brief vacation. The transcript of Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin's conversation with Igor Golembiovskiy follows.

[Golembiovskiy] Boris Nikolayevich, hello. Pardon me for calling you so early, but we were afraid it would be harder to talk to you later. The first question I would like to ask you is extremely trivial, but it has political undertones today: How is your health?

[Yeltsin] First, I must tell you that I am, regrettably, beginning to get accustomed to speculation about my health starting up as soon as I go on vacation. I feel normal [chuvstvuyu sebya normalno]. I have not been seeing my doctors, I have not been going to Matsesta.... I have been working—I have a lot of mail, a lot of documents, I have been reading, writing, and meeting people. But I have, of course, also been relaxing. I have been swimming and going for walks: There has not been much tennis, the weather has been disappointing, the court was wet, but over the last few days it has dried out and I have played. In a word, there are no signs of illness. Talk of illness is just another provocation.

[Golembiovskiy] I cannot fail to ask how you regard the appearance of the so-called "Scenario No. 1" document, if I can use the old terminology. All the mass media are writing and talking about it, and "Scenario No. 2" has appeared. Is political life in the country reaching a new acute pitch? It is strange that the security services are still unable to say anything intelligible either about the authors or the sources of this material.

[Yeltsin] First, this smacks of provocation. Second, you are right, unfortunately. The relevant services have proved powerless, although they were given instructions straightforwardly; however, I still do not have any precise information today.

[Golembiovskiy] Of late you have noticeably distanced yourself from the democrats and radical reformers as if you were choosing a new role for yourself as the voice of the interests of all strata of society, not just the political forces whose objectives and convictions you hold dear. Are you not afraid that the upshot will be that, on the one hand, you will not win supporters among the opposition and, on the other, you will lose support among the democratic strata? Lastly, won't there be too high a price

to pay for concessions to conservative forces, namely the abandonment of the reforms?

[Yeltsin] First of all I cannot agree with what you call my "distancing myself" from anyone whatsoever. I prefer another, more precise definition—broadening the spectrum of cooperation. The complex, crisis situation in Russia and the events of the last few months have revealed two trends in our political life. On the one hand, once again we have the clear polarization of the political forces. The voices of those people who are calling for us to leap backward or forward in a single bound ring loudly in the ears. On the other hand, there is more and more understanding and a desire to organize cooperation and build bridges. These sentiments are being reinforced among political movements and parties of the most diverse orientations. As president I have no right to ignore and disregard this. Following the period of confrontation there is finally a chance of making the mood of cooperation and accord the determining factor. Precise, thorough, patient work is essential here. Passions must not be further intensified.

At the same time I share your disquiet regarding the price of compromise. Can it be achieved, can cooperation be established and the course of reform preserved at the same time? It was this question that was one of the main ones when work on the presidential message was under way. And I believe that an answer has been found. The main idea of the message—strengthening the state on the basis of the Constitution—is cherished by everyone whose common sense has not failed them, everyone who has a sincere interest in Russia's well-being. This is also a platform for cooperation and for deepening reform, and not for turning back the clock. My position is as follows: If you share the spirit of the message, we will find a common language; if not, don't resort to demagoguery, don't divert Russia's citizens from the course toward accord.

[Golembiovskiy] Many political observers are extremely skeptical about the prospects for the rapid signing of an accord document—the opposing sides' interests are too polarized. Do you believe that political reconciliation is indeed feasible? How will events develop, how will you, the president, act if that does not happen and disputes over the document do not defuse but, on the contrary, aggravate the situation?

[Yeltsin] Needless to say, the agreement on civil peace is not a panacea. I have been around a long time and I am not so naive as to expect the agreement to resolve all the problems. But I am convinced that it can be a step toward this. Especially since the range of political forces which have voiced a desire to work on the agreement is quite broad.

The question is: How far will we be able to go down this road, will we stop at formulating a declaration of good intentions or will we be able to take another important step and determine the fundamental bases of accord, the

forms of cooperation, and, most important, the mechanisms of our responsibility to society. I hope we will be able to achieve that. If we do not, I will suggest other options. I will not lose heart. I feel that the main demand now being voiced by people and by all strata of society is that stability is strengthened and our life rendered more peaceful.

[Golembiovskiy] How would you define the essential nature of the present stage in the economic reform? Which way is the Russian economy heading? Both under Gaydar and under Chernomyrdin we seem to be managing the economy as though blind, and there is still the feeling that we do not have a reform program and have not defined the priorities, hence the inconsistency and mutually exclusive measures. This could all end badly, and it is no wonder that people are forecasting a "spring offensive of the working people" when the country will be living not "from one wage packet to the next" but "from one strike to the next." What are your views on that?

[Yeltsin] It has to be acknowledged that the pace of real reform has clearly slowed down and the state's role in deepening the reform is negligible. You can damp down the crisis by means of flexible measures, even timely measures, of course. But you cannot overcome it and transform the economic mechanism that way. As for whether it is a government of reform or not—you can only judge that from whether the reform itself is working and what its results are. That being so, the government still has considerable reserves and is obliged to use them energetically, just as it is obliged to ensure control of the situation and, above all, extricate the economy from the crisis of nonpayments.

As for living "from one strike to the next," all that can be avoided if we learn how to properly elaborate economic policy, anticipate its social consequences, including the negative consequences, and ease the burden of the reform. To be blunt, that is a complex task but not an impossible one.

[Golembiovskiy] Recently politicians and state figures of various persuasions in Russia have been increasingly persistently talking about the need to create some kind of new union on the territory of the CIS. Some see this as a manifestation of Russia's imperial ambitions, others as economic expediency (which is also being disputed), while yet others predict new cataclysms across the whole territory of the former USSR. Is a new unification possible in principle? And who will make the final decisions—presidents, parliaments, or peoples?

[Yeltsin] I would like to rephrase your question—is a complete disunification in the area of the former USSR possible in principle? I believe that life itself has answered that question. It is impossible because it would lead to a sharp lowering of the survivability threshold of each of our countries. It is impossible because it is contrary to the interests of the peoples and their ideas about a normal life. And if that is so, it changes the

question—it is necessary to find the optimum, the most painless, and least conflictual form of cohabitation. And, of course, avoid all adventures.

No matter what people now say about the former Union, I cannot call it the most successful form of the existence of our states and peoples. After all, it was sustained primarily by Russia's potential and resources. It is already being forgotten that for a long time today's independent states were called nothing less than "backward boondocks." We even took pride in the fact that they almost overtook Russia in a very short time. Admittedly, as a rule it was not the done thing to consider at what expense this was achieved.

Russia's position was extremely unsatisfactory. It did not have its own aspect or statehood. It seemed to have blended in with the background as it supported the former Union at the cost of its own prosperity, with the result that its own problems were the last to be resolved. I am convinced that this model of life is completely outmoded now. Today there can be no going back to that.

As for the rapprochement of the states, that has to happen on the basis of a mutual consideration of interests in which Russia's interests are paramount for us. It is hardly possible today to plan in detail how each step in that rapprochement will be formulated politically and legally. But I am bound to agree that Russia's position on this question must be more active, purposeful, progressive, and, if you will, passionate. Especially when we are talking about the fate of our fellow countrymen.

[Golembiovskiy] At the meeting with chief editors you said that, aside from everything else, you wanted to devote the period before the 1996 elections to preparing a worthy successor to yourself. I realise that today is not the time to mention a specific name, but do you know of such a person? This question is relevant today because several people, Ruskoy among them, have already announced their claims to the post of future president of Russia.

[Yeltsin] First of all I am deeply convinced that the Russian presidential elections must be a truly nationwide event [vsenarodnyye]. There can be no deviations from this fundamental principle of Russian democracy. Attempts are being made to deprive the country's citizens of this right. This is a mine of tremendous destructive power laid under Russian statehood.

Second, I am well aware of the desire of certain political circles to artificially destabilize the situation. To call a spade a spade, what they want is to overthrow the president at any price. Such adventures are founded on a thick tissue of lies, baseness, and greed. I want to warn everyone, and journalists first of all—do not believe the rumors that are being circulated, do not succumb to provocation.

I can disabuse these people—all their schemes will be exposed in the early stages and we have sufficient forces to take appropriate measures to preserve and strengthen stability in Russia.

As for the presidential elections, I am working on the assumption that they are to take place in 1996. I am now closely monitoring the activity of potential candidates for the supreme state post. There have been some disappointments and, as they say, some pleasant surprises, too. The parliamentary elections taught us all something. I can now say with a great degree of confidence that if in the 1996 elections the people show their inherent wisdom and perspicacity, then a truly worthy individual and state figure will be elected to the post of president.

[Golembiovskiy] One final question. Boris Nikolayevich, what are your immediate plans on your return to Moscow?

[Yeltsin] I am returning Sunday, and Monday I shall resume my duties in full. On 28 March I am meeting with Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev, this is an important meeting for both states. But as for the immediate period ahead, I have three major issues in addition to my current work. They are—work on the mechanism and levers for implementing the presidential Message. Second—the problem of the budget. I had a meeting here in Sochi with Viktor Stepanovich Chernomyrdin, we examined my observations and corrected certain positions, although questions remained. The budget, as you know, has been sent to the Duma, and we will work on it further. The third issue is the document on civil accord—for me this is a most important matter which, in my view, will determine the political health of society.

[Golembiovskiy] Thank you, Boris Nikolayevich, and I wish you a happy return.

Naina Yeltsin: President Feels 'Absolutely Normal'

PM2503193394 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

[Gennadiy Bochkarev account of statement by Naina Yeltsina, given in Sochi on 25 March: "Yesterday Our Correspondent Met With Naina Yeltsina in Sochi and Heard: 'Would We Really Have Allowed Him To Work If He Had Been Seriously Ill?'"]

[Text] Sochi—"I cannot understand why there is such an unhealthy interest in the president's health. Boris Nikolayevich works every morning. He has bathed in the sea. He has been going for walks. He has made several trips in a helicopter, and toured the port of Tuapse, which must be developed. The court has dried out a bit, and today he played tennis. Inasmuch as the weather has allowed us to, we have relaxed. Even the fact that we have simply changed scenery has had a beneficial effect on us.

"How much can you speculate about the president's health? If he has gone to rest in Sochi, does that mean that he must definitely be undergoing treatment? Are there no doctors in Moscow!? How many illnesses have people invented for the president. But would we, his family, really have allowed Boris Nikolayevich to work if he had been seriously ill? Are we enemies of his health?

"I would like to tell KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA: Believe me, the president feels absolutely normal, and there is no need to carry on speculating about his health. You must understand that it is easier to tolerate any lie but the one that concerns the health of a person close to you."

Kozyrev Reports Yeltsin in 'Good Health'

LD2605141694 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1243 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Report by special ITAR-TASS correspondents Vasilii Belousov and Dmitriy Gorokhov]

[Text] Murmansk, 26 Mar—During his two-week vacation, the head of the Russian state worked intensely and gave us so many instructions that it will take at least an entire month to carry them out. This capacity for work shows that Boris Yeltsin is in good health and in good shape, Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev stated here today. He commented on the president's state of health at the request of journalists, after having completed his talks with [Foreign Minister] Bjorn Tore Godal, the head of the Norwegian foreign policy department.

Shots of Yeltsin Said Taken From 1993 Footage

MK2603083794 Moscow KURANTY in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

[Report by Vasilii Starov: "The President Will Have Scandals Galore"]

[Text] B. Yeltsin is supposed to come back to Moscow today or tomorrow (this weekend, that is) from Sochi where, they maintain, he even took a plunge in the 10-degree seawater.

Yet another cold bath awaits him in Moscow. Radio Liberty, referring to U.S. television people working in the capital and painstakingly compiling a video library, has revealed a sensation: The small president-on-vacation story is the product of simple editing. One shot edited into a small video report was untraditional and out of keeping with the general tenor, showing the president wearing a suit against the backdrop of a swimming pool. They insist that the shot is extraneous and comes from footage dating back to ...September 1993. It is not clear who needed this gimmick and why. The odd thing, however, is that the story was not seen again in later news programs, and foreign companies begging for the tape for personal purposes were left empty-handed.

Specialist Denies Yeltsin Alcohol Problem

PM2503192594 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA
PRAVDA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 2

["Own Information" report under the "Expert Opinion" rubric: "The War Against the Party System Took Its Toll"]

[Text] Moscow—Asked whether Boris Yeltsin has an alcohol dependency problem, one of Russia's leading addiction specialists whom KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA approached replied unambiguously: No.

He had visited Sverdlovsk on several occasions during Yeltsin's time [as first secretary of the CPSU Oblast Committee] and had learned from his colleagues about the first secretary's reputation as a sober person, drinking far less than the accepted norm in party elite circles.

The famous addiction specialist also considers as perfectly illogical the supposition that Yeltsin acquired an abnormal yearning for alcohol while he was first secretary of the Moscow Gorkom [City Party Committee]. There is no genuine testimony to this effect from his colleagues. Had such testimony existed, it would have been inevitably used by Yeltsin's fierce opponents at the time. Both the Moscow Gorkom and the CPSU Central Committee, let alone the competent organs, were at that time peeping through all possible keyholes, looking for an alcoholic criminal.

Our interlocutor went on to offer his explanation of the well-known situations which have engendered a mass of rumors. Of course, he remembers Yeltsin's strange speech and the mask-like expression on his face at the city party conference when he was dismissed from the office of first secretary. In his opinion, Boris Yeltsin, who had been taken there from the TsKB [precise expansion unknown—possible Central Clinical Hospital], had been pumped full of medicines, possibly narcotics. This may not have been done with malicious intention (as it happened, according to claims by Tsedenbal-Junior, when his own father was dismissed from office), it may have been part of the prescribed course of treatment.

Ever since Yeltsin took the path of war against the state-communist machine, and to this very day in fact, the incumbent president of Russia has been, according to the specialist's assertion, in a chronic psychotraumatic state [v khronicheskoy psikhotravmiruyushchey situatsii]. He finds it simply necessary to keep himself up with sundry tranquilizers which, incidentally, is recommended for many people of his age.

As regards the Spanish crash [Ispanskaya katastrofa], our interlocutor's opinion differs somewhat from the official version. He believes that Boris Yeltsin suffered not only an injury to his spine but also a cranial-cerebral injury. There is no doubt that he suffers from acute pains, forcing him to take painkillers as well as tranquilizers.

"You try and take something, if only a sleeping pill, at night," he added. "The next morning you will probably not feel quite yourself. Something like a hangover."

Yeltsin Leaves Sochi for Moscow

LD2703103094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1005 GMT 27 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Shchegoleva]

[Text] Sochi March 27 TASS—President Boris Yeltsin and his wife left Sochi by air for Moscow at noon on Sunday [27 March].

"I had a good rest, notwithstanding the fact that weather was rainy. I even played tennis and had swims in the sea, although the water temperature was only 7-8 degrees. I worked for four hours every day," Yeltsin told journalists before departure.

In response to questions as to what important matters await him in Moscow, the president said: "We need to finalise work on a mechanism for the enactment of the presidential message to the Federal Assembly. I worked on it in Sochi, and a group of experts did the same in Moscow. We shall now combine what has been done and will discuss the mechanism together with the Federal Assembly."

"Preparing an agreement on civil peace is also a matter to which I attach much importance and which I was also preoccupied with when in Sochi."

"I would like very much the agreement to be signed by all parties, public associations, groups, factions, power bodies, by the Federation Council, the State Duma, the government and the president. This would bring about an auspicious and calm situation throughout Russia", Yeltsin said.

Yeltsin Explains Work Plans on Return to Moscow

LD2703123894 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1100 GMT 27 Mar 94

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] President Boris Yeltsin has returned to Moscow from Sochi after a two-week vacation.

At Sochi airport he said that he had had a good holiday. Asked by our correspondent about his immediate working plans, the president replied:

[Begin Yeltsin recording] What is waiting in Moscow? Well, first we need to complete the mechanism for implementing the presidential message to the Federal Assembly. I have been working on this here and a group has also been at work on it in Moscow. We will now amalgamate our work somehow and we will accordingly, so to speak, and in conjunction with the Federal Assembly, discuss this implementation mechanism.

Second, there is the agreement on civil accord. I attach very great importance to this and have been engaged on this matter here as well. We also agreed that a working group would work on it in Moscow, and work has continued over the past two weeks. It also, so to speak, has its own material.

Of course, we would like, I personally would like us to sign this agreement—all parties, public associations and groups, factions, power bodies—I mean, the Federation Council and the State Duma, the government, and the president.

I think this would create a more favorable and calm situation in the whole of Russia, and not only in Russia. [end recording] [video shows Yeltsin outside airport building surrounded by journalists]

Yeltsin's Sochi Vacation Activities Noted

PM2803094794 Moscow TRUD in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

[Correspondent Igor Chernov report: "President Has Right to Vacation Too"]

[Text] Russian President Boris Yeltsin's two-week vacation is coming to an end. As informed sources report, he plans to fly to Moscow on Sunday afternoon. He is pleased with his vacation and, but for the rumors about a coup in preparation which are disturbing the capital, his mood would be perfectly fine. Incidentally, this was helped by the weather—it was really warm in Sochi.

The president spent the second week of his vacation more strenuously (I do not think this was done with the aim of "demonstrating" his good health). He met with Prime Minister Chernomyrdin, who flew down to discuss problems relating to the economy and some foreign and domestic policy questions. The meeting, as the prime minister told journalists, was not an emergency meeting. Moreover, the president continued to be briefed on the state of affairs in the Kuban and flew by helicopter, along with Krasnodar Kray Administration Head N. Yegorov, over the Black Sea coast.

Yeltsin did not, course, forget to relax during his vacation. According to the Sochi Town Hall press service he made several trips around the resort and did the local sights, while the helicopter trip with Yegorov, it emerged, pursued purely sporting ends—a duck shoot was held at Priazovskiy Plavni.

The president's wife, Naina Iosifovna, who visited Sochi's House of Fashion and the Mizi-Maxi Theater of Fashions last Thursday, also imparted to journalists some details of Boris Nikolayevich's life in the resort. According to her, the president even took a dip in the sea (the temperature of the sea water is nine degrees).

Aware that there are the Matsesta therapeutic waters in Sochi, which all the country's past leaders have taken to improve their health, journalists rushed to report that

Boris Yeltsin had also undergone a course of treatment there. But the Matsesta complex' chief medical officer, A. Shvyrova, denied this information was true: "Unfortunately, Boris Nikolayevich did not visit us. If he had, we would certainly have drawn attention to our plight...."

During the president's two-week vacation only a film crew from Ostankino managed to visit the dacha by the Bocharovo brook. Your TRUD correspondent's press pass did not, unfortunately, enable him to gain access to the estate. I was courteously admitted to the guardroom, my details were taken down..., and I was thanked for my concern. I had gone to the checkpoint at the president's dacha to clarify the details of a minor incident—on Wednesday a group of Sochi inhabitants had organized a picket at the gates.... Some people were demanding an apartment from the president, others an increased pension, someone else wanted the president to deal with the local mafia. After holding their midday rally, the people went their separate ways. There were no other excesses in Sochi.

Yeltsin 'Full of Energy' During Sverdlovsk Days

PM2803092594 Moscow KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA in Russian 26 Mar 94 pp 1-2

[Vladimir Sanatin article: "...But Then B.N. Went to Moscow. Short Tour of the Head of State's Recent Past. Is the Russian President Healthy? An Impolite and Offensive Question for Yeltsin That Has Troubled the Public All Week. How Rhetorical Is It?"]

[Text] Yekaterinburg—Lots of foreign and domestic news agencies are now trying to learn from Sverdlovsk people who used to know Yeltsin well whether the former first secretary of Sverdlovsk CPSU Oblast Committee [obkom] suffered from any chronic ailments. Put it this way—among our circle, who were once employed at the CPSU obkom special hospital, nobody saw Boris Nikolayevich walking through the confusing corridors of the hospital building on Working Youth Embankment with prescriptions in his hand. I personally met his second and third in command in this building—everyone without exception had to traipse round a dozen or so offices before they could get their prescriptions filled! Boris Nikolayevich can be rebuked for not paying attention to his health and not always finding the time for compulsory checkups. But that is not our business, it is the business of Yeltsin's relatives and doctors.

Admittedly, we would note that Boris Nikolayevich could have been improving his health at the medical establishment in the settlement of Izoplit, which was even more secret than the clinic on the embankment.... But, strange as it may seem today, the Sverdlovsk party nomenklatura's relationship with the press was democratic, and I did manage to get a few urgent interviews precisely in this "secret" medical firm, right at patients' bedsides. Unfortunately, over the course of many years I never saw Boris Nikolayevich here either. In the first half

of the eighties Yeltsin was so hard-working, demanding, and energetic that he was more likely to drive any of his colleagues to Izoplit through overwork. I recall that I met up at the settlement with Viktor Makarov, a former "Uralkhimmash" director, who had been taken ill inopportunely. During this period Yeltsin was impatient about pursuing the idea of fundamentally restructuring and modernizing this plant, and insisting on automating old production facilities. He would tour the shops himself with a good 100 plant directors and city or rayon committee first secretaries trailing behind him.... Yeltsin sometimes set industrial enterprises such major and fantastic tasks that anyone—even the fittest director—could have a seizure!

In the eighties, under Boris Nikolayevich, the Sverdlovsk Oblast nomenklatura worked day and night, battling for the oblast's identity to the last breath, without exaggeration. Oblast Executive Committee Chairman Mekhrintsev and Deputy Chairman Shkrebnev died untimely deaths. Top officials' concern about model plants and villages was never noticed [as published] in the capital, and was perhaps geared to gaining the Kremlin's attention.... The more you built the more investment you got. That was the way things were! I entirely share the view that many responsive, hardworking, and reliable officials of that time were stung by the innumerable visits to the oblast by highly placed guests.... But you cannot touch the number one in such circumstances! Any incautious behavior by a top man around a dinner table even of dull clerks from Staraya Ploshchad could result in his being sent to Paris or even Addis Ababa. There had been other examples of this happening in the history of the top Urals nomenklatura....

Now to turn to the question of "this matter." A secretary with chronic ailments—if such a person had existed—would never have gone to work in the Moscow City Committee. If some people today are annoyed that Yeltsin was healthy enough to make smart decisions, then in that case it is his opponents who are suffering from hangovers. Nobody from Sverdlovsk who had been through the Komsomol and party schooling would claim that Boris Nikolayevich was sanctimonious about alcohol. His participation in many youth and construction brigade festivities was a tradition. But, as eyewitnesses will recall, the group of top officials would never stick around until the bitter end. Boris Nikolaevich, as a rule, instructed more junior party members to look after the young people and ensure order at the festivities—and then hurried off to his own work. The good thing about Yeltsin was that he did not lord things up at the celebrations, but realized that the young people had earned the money themselves, and, after the meal—somewhat to the embarrassment of the Komsomol members—would leave a large sum on the table. This purely ethical gesture would be copied by the other party bosses.

Insofar as I recall, Yeltsin's entourage was not overfond of people even hinting at going for a drink in the evening. Aleksey Tsaregorodtsev, the former first secretary of the

Komsomol oblast committee, who was a Yeltsin aide, would get angry if he thought there had been any drinking the previous day and could quite justifiably ask: "Did you have to indulge last night, guys?" One talented man dismissed by Yeltsin as a Komsomol obkom secretary for having attended a single party literally a month after starting his career is today part of the Urals industrial guard. The man turned out to be unusually strong and was able to rehabilitate himself 200 percent after Yeltsin's "punishment." But how tough was Yeltsin himself when it came to the honor of a party worker?

Paradoxically, in the eighties the capital's opponents rebuked the provincial Yeltsin for violating human rights, including the rights of drinkers. Boris Nikolayevich stoically supported and pursued throughout the Union the Seversk Pipe Plant's initiative of "Collective Guarantees for Labor Discipline!"—this meant that if a single team member got drunk or went absent, the entire collective would not get its bonus! Lawyers from the capital's party apparatus hinted to Yeltsin that neither the labor family nor a worker's personal family should suffer, that alcohol dependency is a medical rather than a party matter, that in this instance the cure should be a private one rather than a party and state one.... Alas, it seems that in those days Boris Nikolayevich was more consistently in favor of the anti-alcohol legislation than Yegor Kuzmich [Ligachev].

I recall how I went into the office of V. Manyukhin, second secretary of the CPSU obkom, with a freshly printed "dry" law. Viktor Mitrofanovich, who was greatly concerned about the oblast budget and the timely payment of wages, "assessed" the Staraya Ploshchad initiative in terms which I had rarely heard even among a small group of friends on a fishing trip.... Boris Nikolayevich was silent at the time—clearly he was more subject to party discipline and was more cautious. Or perhaps he felt slightly responsible for the fact that his own campaign against drunkenness at work had been so distorted into the Politburo initiative.

...Who was the first to raise the subject of Russian President Boris Yeltsin's "health"? Yeltsin's mother—Klavdiya Vasilyevna—was still in full health when we visited her with foreign TV journalists. Yes, his mother was terribly worried about her son's health, his mental balance, and the fact that the Moscow climate did not suit him very much and he often came down with colds. Klavdiya Vasilyevna was knitting woolen socks for Boris Nikolayevich. The bottle of vodka which my foreign colleagues had brought in order to talk in greater detail with [Yeltsin's] younger brother Mikhail Nikolayevich was requisitioned by me and placed in a briefcase. I told my colleagues that Russians bring out their own bottles.... And if Mikhail Nikolayevich wanted to greet you with alcohol he would do so, if he did not—tough luck!

Tea was served, along with jam from Klavdiya Vasilyevna's kitchen garden. There were plenty of photographs of Boris Nikolayevich as a child and a young man to keep the conversation going....

And yet somebody was playing tricks! There is no other way of putting it. Another team of journalists—not the one that was with KOMSOMOLSKAYA PRAVDA. When I visited the team of construction workers where Boris Nikolayevich's brother Mikhail Yeltsin worked a few months later, I found him very angry. Having trusted the West European press without having any reliable local journalist intermediaries present, Mikhail Nikolayevich later read some pearls of wisdom about the Yeltsin family that had been concocted.

The sincere and very hospitable family found itself described as "distant," "uneducated," "country bumpkins," and, of course, "showing signs of alcohol dependency".... Quite honestly, if such provocative attacks had been made by the partners with whom I worked, Mikhail Nikolayevich would have thumped me on the back of the neck with his concrete shovel. As a result we stood on the roof of a unfinished house and agreed never to give foreigners any more information on the Yeltsin family!

...Yeltsin was absolutely healthy when he left Sverdlovsk for Moscow. The last time I heard his happy, optimistic voice was in the office of Viktor Kashpurov, the CPSU obkom's finance chief, who was concerned about his boss' accommodations. In practice these were telephone calls of farewell. Judging from these conversations, Yeltsin's first days in Moscow were full of energy and hope. Who was to know that there would be so many suspicious people in the capital who are perhaps more sick than the president!

Yeltsin Issues Decrees

LD2703144894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1306 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Russian President Yeltsin has suspended the decision by the administration of the Krasnoyarsk Territory of 22 February 1994 on a referendum on the draft law on organization of state power in the territory.

The spokesman for the Russian President has said that the decree of 26 March reads that a referendum on the draft law which determines in many respects the territorial status is the violation of Article 10, part two of Article 66 and part one of Article 77 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

On Saturday Yeltsin issued a decree on holding on 26-27 April in Moscow of an international conference "Legal and information problems of the creation of a single CIS economic space." Invited are delegates of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the European Union, leaders of ministries and departments, scientific and public organizations.

On the same day Yeltsin greeted the participants and guests of the blitz chess tournament "Kremlin Stars—94." His message says that chess have always been popular sport in Russia.

Yeltsin voiced hope that new chess stars will emerge during the tournament, said the president's spokesman.

Counterintelligence Service Denies 'Purge'

PM2803090794 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

["Own information" report: "Russia Still Needs Strong Special Services"]

[Text] A press conference was held yesterday at the Russian Federation Federal Counterintelligence Service. It was stated that recently, since the Russian president's edict on disbanding the Security Ministry and creating the Federal Counterintelligence Service, the staffers have been certified and the special service's directorates and subdepartments had been formed with a consideration for the reforms which are being carried out in the country.

According to Oleg Lobov, secretary of the Russian Security Council, there has been no purge. The staffers were selected on a professional principle, for their professional and personal qualities. The Russian president's desire to create a strong Russian special service has been considered as far as possible.

Coup-Rumor Spreaders 'Revealed' by Counterintelligence

LD2503183894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1713 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] At the request of the Prosecutor General's Office, the Russian Federal Counterintelligence Service (FCS) revealed the persons who had been spreading rumors about another coup in Russia, FCS Director Sergey Stepashin told a news conference in Moscow Friday. He declined to reveal their names saying "we will tell you more about this as soon as possible." In an answer to an Interfax question, Stepashin only indicated that four rumor-spreaders were identified. Their fate and location are now in the hands of the Prosecutor General's Office.

Stepashin appreciated the calm reaction by the president, the prime minister and other people involved in the alleged coup and called on journalists to "approach fakes of all types in a more balanced manner."

Among other reasons for the appearance of such rumors, Stepashin pointed to the intricacy of the economic situation, the amnesty and its political effects. He added that the authors of the scheme also wanted to see the reaction by the president, the power structures and persons mentioned in their speculations and set them against each other. They failed, Stepashin said.

Officials Condemn Coup Allegations

LD2503163494 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1542 GMT 25 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Olga Semenova]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—Yuriy Baturin, the Russian president's national security assistant, and Sergey Stepashin, the director of the Federal Counterintelligence Service resolutely opposed publications about an alleged coup plot in Russia at a news conference held at the Lubyanka [former premises of KGB] today.

They said that it was wholly a matter for the consciences of the authors of the articles and the competent sources whom they cited how substantiated these publications were.

Procuracy General Begins Proceedings on Coup Rumors

LD2803181194 Moscow Ostankino Television First Channel Network in Russian 1700 GMT 28 Mar 94

[From the "Novosti" newscast]

[Text] The Russian Procuracy General has deemed as not corresponding to reality the information on a coup d'etat allegedly in preparation, which was published in the OBSHCHAYA GAZETA and disturbed public peace. Taking into account the fact that the actions of the unidentified persons, who had sent the above information to the OBSHCHAYA GAZETA editorial office, can be characterized as crime carrying liability for slander accompanied by accusation of a state crime, the Procuracy General instituted criminal proceedings on the basis of this fact today.

Editor Explains Emergence of Coup Memo

MK2603104094 Moscow NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

[Article by Gleb Pavlovskiy, editor-in-chief of the VEK XX I MIR—The 20th Century and the World—magazine, under the "Urbi et Orbi" rubric: "Confession of a Versifier. The Author of the Scandalous Document Thinks That Political Hysterics at the Top Might Have Been Provoked by Anyone but Him"]

[Text] Yesterday OBSHCHAYA GAZETA named the author of the ill-famed "Version No. 1." It turned out to be Gleb Pavlovskiy, a well-known journalist. Today, NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA publishes the full text of his article that the author appears to have offered to his colleagues from OBSHCHAYA GAZETA. Mr. Pavlovskiy brought it to the NEZAVISIMAYA GAZETA editorial board on the evening of 24 March.

All last week I listened to the news with half an ear, did not follow the press, and did not realize that the buzz of familiar words about a "coup" had any bearing on a rough copy marked "Version No. 1" that flew away from me. This is why the latest issue of the ARGUMENTY I FAKTY weekly, with an interview by Yuriy Baturin, presidential national security adviser, under the icy heading/notification "A Search for an Anonymous Person Is Under Way" first elicited astonishment, then made me laugh, and finally worried me.

Who is it that they are searching for? I state with absolute clarity that "Version No. 1" is a working text of which I am the sole owner as the person who ordered it, a routine working fact-sheet, a compilation of open data—reports of news agencies, primarily TASS, POSTFACTUM, and RIA, and also press, radio reports, and so forth, of course, including city rumors.

The text is least of all a proclamation by a hidden troublemaker. It is technical in nature, that is to say, it cannot have any author in principle. It is an analytical semi-finished information product prepared by various people using a production-line method, not meant for publication at all, a fact that can be deduced at least from the inscription "Confidential" in the left-hand corner. Who of them is the "anonymous person?" The man who reads the current press with a pencil, tracking the crossings of names and dates? The man who phoned information sources to find out whether so and so really met with N. at 1700? A school girl who puts the texts produced in the data base? Or I—a customer who puts the following question to that same data base: "What would a coherent coup hypothesis look like if rumors about one (with which Moscow is abuzz) are added to mass media reports?"

I did not order only one theory—there are further numbers, too. Having ordered a string of data on key words "Yeltsin, B.N./Conspiracy against/Removal/Duma/March/Contacts of officials... (followed by names)/Pro Theory," I obtained a summary of data confirming this suggestion. If I had ordered a summary of counterarguments—a contra theory—I would have received precisely that. Both require 15 minutes of work by the data base operator, a number of clarifying phone calls from the editorial board, and another half an hour (maximum!) to compile all that into a coherent text.

But an editorial board is a communicating courtyard, and editors' tables are not a place where anything should be left. I do not know why someone took "Version No. 1" pages from my table and why he or she did not take, say, "Version No. 3?" But if someone is going to tell me that unconfirmed theories should not be written on paper, I would laugh in his face—how else can they be checked, I wonder?

What is important is not who wrote what, but who distributed something that was not written for him, where, and for what purpose. Strangely enough, this frivolous question has not been raised, but everyone is going out of one's way to peer over each other's shoulder.

As far as I understand it, the government is going to find me and the data base operator to try us for libel on... what? On an authorized list of key words? What seems to me as another interesting idea is the limitation of the right to consider theories (let me remind you that none of those involved in the production of this paper ever intended to publish it. And even if he did? An intention cannot be punished by law).

For the information of Mr. National Security Adviser, there are dozens and dozens of places in the country—apart from coup plotters, madmen, spies, and financiers—where people are checking every single day yet again whether a military coup is being prepared. Whether the president is in good health. With whom the defense minister is meeting and what the hell the troops are doing in the capital, and so on and so forth. This is not column writing, this is the mulling over of theories, this is what analysts and journalists are paid for, a work that sometimes results in an article, sometimes in a memo that will be thrown into a wastepaper basket upon being read. A version is advanced, checked, rejected—and forgotten. A new one emerges.

The fact that citizens advance and discuss theories is beyond the security services' competence. Those who do not want to learn something unpleasant about themselves should not rummage through other people's papers.

Under President Dwight Eisenhower, the U.S. Congress officially banned analysts from considering military conflict scenarios that envisioned the United States' capitulation. The ban, booed by the analytic community, had an important reservation, however: "in research financed from the government budget." He who pays the piper calls the tune! No, our money is not from the budget, so we can look into what we think fit. The 1991 Belovezhskaya Forest coup, unfortunately, was not preceded by the advancing and consideration of theories envisioning such a possibility: The first and the last theory was advanced unopposed to be immediately implemented.

The editorial paper stolen from me (I did not consider it secret at all) was indeed distributed with lightning speed, as it was repackaged into a semiofficial one. Naturally, I did not give this memo to OBSHCAYA GAZETA—what for? Even though the newspaper has the right to publish a document that has been put in circulation by someone and has turned out to be the centerpiece of a provocative game. The immediate dispatch of a trivial text to dozens of addresses accompanied by giving it an air of instruction and raising a bureaucratic tide that met it exposes, in my view, the work of the Kremlin and the ears of mass organizers specializing in "Da-Da-Net-Da" ["Yes-Yes-No-Yes"—reference to April 1993 referendum presidential slogan]. At any rate, it is the bureaucrats who commented on the rough copy as "a conspiracy," "an action of dark forces," and even "arson" whom I consider to be the actual publishers and instigators of the document in a shape that was arbitrarily imposed on it! The mass media have done in this situation what they are supposed to be doing—they have done their best to exploit the sensation that has suddenly come their way. They cannot and should not do anything else. As for the fact that we were used once again—well, eternal fools are to be taught till the end of time.

The "anonymous person" is the one who distributed the paper in government corridors and has been maintaining—or affecting—political hysteria at the top. I would recommend that government investigators look for an "anonymous person" in their own offices. That is my theory.

Finally, I offer my apologies to those people to whom this incident has brought trouble, including official trouble. Still, it is not I who is the source of the trouble, but their official colleagues who were stupid enough or thought it advantageous to present a private memo as a document "concerning all." But by issuing "Version No. 1400," B.N. Yeltsin has caused the country much greater trepidations. How about an investigation?

Coup Talk Taken Seriously

PM2803125994 Moscow TRUD in Russian 26 Mar 94
p 1

[Untitled article by political observer Yuriy Lepskiy under the "Seven Days of Our Life" rubric]

[Text] All week people were telephoning the editorial office from various Russian cities, and for some reason, many asked one and the same question: Is it true that "Ostankino" is being stormed? The callers had "heard" or "read" somewhere about a new version of a Kremlin coup actively being discussed in Moscow this week. Evidently, while the capital was discussing whether or not "version No. 1" bore any relation to reality, the provinces had managed to "enrich" the scheme with obligatory elements which it lacked with, for example, the storming of "Ostankino" and General Makashov leading the assault.

Personally, having always respected the reader, I even now consider these telephone questions no more naive than the claims of professional politicians that peace and accord will come about in Russia as a result of the amnesty applied to the recent prisoners of Lefortovo.

Terrible though it may be, everything or almost everything, set forth in "version 1," which revealed the mechanism of a possible coup, could in my view perfectly well have happened in reality. I go along with my readers in not ruling out in principle the possibility that Mr. "A" and Mr. "B" in the president's close or broader entourage had arranged to remove him from power by pleading the head of state's poor state of health (was this not exactly what Gorbachev's closest entourage did in August 1991?). Nor do I see anything remarkable in the fact that some Mr. "C," expelled from the political Olympus for lack of talent, grayness, and idleness, is not averse to mounting a white steed and riding into the Kremlin....

However much the president's aides and counterintelligence officials may go on about the absurd and nonsensical nature of the false report that was disseminated, I know along with my readers that it created such a ballyhoo because it too closely resembles our actual life.

Alas, political coups or attempts to carry them out are becoming almost the norm—people are starting to get accustomed to them, as to snow in winter and green leaves when summer comes. Hence, the mistrust of attempts by the “opposing” sides to confirm priority for the principles of civil peace and accord in our harassed society.

The political plot as a means of resolving contradictions in society is evidently characteristic of our life even now. Secret or hush-hush decisions by cabinet and apparatus are another old standard in our political practice. Somehow I cannot recall a broad discussion in the press and on television of the consequences of increasing the customs tariffs on imported food before that decision was adopted, and yet it affects literally every Russian. It is a question, above all, of food prices. Is quiet cabinet lobbying in the government by supporters of Vice Premier Zaverukha not a small “economic plot” to resolve the problems of Russian agricultural producers this year? Oh why does it not occur to anyone to organize a “plot” or to carry out a “coup” IN YOUR INTERESTS AND MINE [uppercase as published]? Why is it that, after all these cataclysms perpetrated “in the name of the people,” things are no easier for the people themselves...?

The political coup is the natural offspring of communist ideology. On 7 November 1994 that grandfather will be 77 years old. In October 1993 his lively grandchildren—let us consider them so—got up to mischief again. Well, where there are grandchildren there will also be fun, while there is this blood kinship, while this genealogical tree with its roots back in October 1917 has not withered....

Recent Coup Rumors Viewed

PM2803122394 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 2

[Article by observer Aleksandr Golts: “Playing at Plots as a Specific Against Unemployment”]

[Text] For the umpteenth time we have to note that spring in Russia is a time when schizophrenia and political games are aggravated. It is no accident that the most “drastic” congresses of people’s deputies have been in the spring. But there are no congresses, no Supreme Soviet. But some people constantly want to play at political crises. I admit that when I read the now renowned “scenario no. 1” document reminiscent of an amateurish parody of “information to consider” from “Seventeen Moments of Spring” [television series from the sixties, set during World War II], I was surprised that anyone was still attaching serious importance to it.

At any Moscow get-together there will unfailingly by a former teacher of scientific communism who now calls himself a political scientist. And he will buttonhole us and unfailingly start to expand on his predictions regarding the struggle in the Kremlin corridors and the prospects of political development in Russia. These predictions were once so popular and well paid that

everyone from journalists to theatrical producers set about producing them. But it emerged very soon that for all the subtlety of some constructs they suffered a very important shortcoming: They had only a very indirect bearing on reality. And for that reason they are failing to come true. To make at least some real forecast you must know at least something. In economics, social psychology, sociology, it doesn’t matter. The press cuttings which our political scientists employ are useful but not enough. The forecasters’ market has begun to empty.

And suddenly passions are being heated over the most commonplace political fantasy. Statements and counter-statements, the start of an investigation, the expectation of new and even more scandalous “scenarios,” there can be no doubt that they will appear. On the basis of the principle: If you like it, I will draw another one. So that what is interesting is not the document itself but the utterly inappropriate reaction to it by some of our political elite. And in my view the present situation in Russia was reflected to a far greater degree in that reaction than in the document itself.

This situation is very complex. Primarily in the economy, where the decline of production is continuing and the crisis of nonpayments is growing, followed by a wave of strikes. The government and the president are faced with an extraordinarily difficult task: selectively financing sectors of vital importance to the state and at the same time not starting to print unsupported money, not sliding into hyperinflation.

But for all that it is a case of complexities of a different order from those which existed a few months ago. There is social tension in Russia but no serious political tension can be discerned. One very high-ranking German politician admitted to me that, when he set off for Moscow recently, he expected to see a city overexcited by plot rumors. In reality he was struck by the existing stability. People do not want to go to meetings or even to elections. And if they do nonetheless elect someone they give their preference not to those who promise the “delights of paradise” but to those who intend to ensure the streets are cleaned.

Which, actually, is what a sizeable proportion of Russian politicians seem to be trying to do in their daily practical deeds. Chernomyrdin and Chubays, Kozyrev and Shakhrai, Luzhkov and Zaverukha are different people who adhere to different views. But they are united by one thing: They have to resolve specific problems of the state’s life. They are putting together the budget and determining the priority of particular tasks. Sometimes they make mistakes. But sometimes they also achieve success.

Success like the talks with IMF executive director Michel Camdessus. The point here is by no means the possibility of obtaining \$1.5 billion in systemic credit. The point is that Western financiers, who take nothing on trust,

having studied the draft budget and analyzed the economic situation in Russia, have reached the conclusion that the government's plans to lead the country out of the crisis are realistic.

But nor can we fail to see something else: In this situation the politicians who are geared toward a struggle with someone or something, the "Storm und Drang" politicians, remain unwanted. They were irreplaceable when the old system had to be destroyed. But because of their lack of specific knowledge they are utterly useless in building the Russian state. And it was they who needed the stories about plots. Because in a situation of mutual suspicion and intrigue they are like fish in water. I am more than convinced that playing at plots or countering them is an effective means of struggling against unemployment.

It is true that this is the unemployment of a quite narrow circle of underqualified politicians and just as underqualified experts. It was they who organized a festival for themselves this week—a small coup. It is merely a pity that yet again they have taken serious people away from their work. And not only in Russia but also beyond.

But on the other hand this type of escapism, that is a departure from reality, is no bad thing for Russia. Of course, it costs society a lot to maintain such politicians but they are better off playing with their "scenarios." God forbid they try to do something for real. On two occasions already this has been tried by people who were threatened with idleness. Everyone is well aware what came of it.

LDPR Activities in St. Petersburg Viewed

LD2603173694 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Excerpts] [Announcer] The Liberal Democrats were discussing the local elections in Petersburg today.

[Correspondent] About 1,000 Liberal Democrats of the north-west gathered in the St. Petersburg Hotel, opposite the Aurora on its permanent mooring. Some rows were full of naval officers. [passage omitted] Zhirinovskiy was very optimistic about the prospects for his party in Petersburg. [video shows correspondent interviewing Vladimir Zhirinovskiy]

[Begin recording] [Correspondent] How strong is support for you here in St. Petersburg, and what sort of structure do you intend to set up here?

[Zhirinovskiy] Well, the second thing... [pauses] this is the main assistance for our party in Russia. We have paid a lot of attention to Petersburg and the oblast, and today we are holding a conference of representatives of [word indistinct] organizations, we are appointing a new leadership. [end recording]

[Correspondent] The Liberal Democrats, it seems, are taking the region seriously. Zhirinovskiy's people have met in St. Petersburg at the most critical moment, when

it is still unclear whether the St. Petersburg city assembly elections will be acknowledged as valid. If the elections were to be recognized as valid, the Liberal Democrats would not get a single seat in the city Duma, and over half the seats would go to democratically-oriented blocs.

Zhirinovskiy Requests Financial Aid for Party

LD2603183894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] The chairman of Russia's Liberal-Democratic party Vladimir Zhirinovskiy addressed Prime-Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin with a formal request for financial injections now that his party finds itself in strained circumstances. A press statement released by Zhirinovskiy's party said as much.

According to Zhirinovskiy, a political party which carried a general election is entitled to get financial and material support from the government. (The Liberal-Democratic party polled 23 percent of overall vote in last December's elections to Russia's State Duma - IF). The international community recognized his victory, said Zhirinovskiy, and people were joining his party en masse in all the 89 regions of Russia.

Daily, an enormous number of citizens of the Russian and other former Soviet republics addressed the party's headquarters with a variety of questions, including political and legal, and many people came to visit the party's headquarters. All that explained the need for a well-prepared staff under the party's 60-member Central Committee.

In the meantime, the Central and Moscow committees, as well as the party's youth wing were headquartered in a building that was crying out for repairs.

A decision to offer the Liberal-Democrats new headquarters and financial aid would, in Zhirinovskiy's view, meet the will of most Russians.

Zhirinovskiy Sees 'Plots' Hatched Against Party

LD2603194494 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1731 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Lev Rumyantsev]

[Text] St. Petersburg, 26 March—Nearly 700 delegates from the north-western oblasts of the country have gathered in St. Petersburg for a regional conference of the Liberal Democratic Party, which was addressed by party leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

"All sorts of plots are presently being hatched against us, the special services are onto us, and so we must strengthen our unity. At the fifth congress of the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, which is to be held in Moscow on 2 April, I shall raise the issue of strengthening the single chain of command in the party," Zhirinovskiy said.

Touching on the state of affairs in the economy, he used his usual vocabulary to describe the profound crisis, and reiterated the lack of talent amongst the country's leaders. Only the Liberal Democratic Party of Russia, once in power, can in his view offer Russian Federation citizens a better life.

Zhirinovskiy on Presidential Ambitions, Influences

AU2803121394 Munich DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG in German 25 Mar 94 pp 3,4

["Exclusive" Article by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy: "When I Am President..."]

[Text] Since the political earthquake caused by the parliamentary elections in Russia last September, no politician on this planet has been the target of such fanatical media interest as Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, leader of the victorious Liberal Democrats. All the songs of hatred that are being sung about him seem incapable of stopping his victory procession. Last week in Moscow, Zhirinovskiy conducted an exhaustive tete-a-tete with former U.S. President Richard Nixon, whom President Bill Clinton had sent to the Russian capital to discover Zhirinovskiy's real thoughts. Nixon expressed his approval of Russia's wish to regain its great power position and of its claim for equal treatment. We present, exclusively for DEUTSCHE NATIONAL-ZEITUNG and DEUTSCHE WOCHEN-ZEITUNG readers, an article by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy about his plans as future Russian president:

The most ridiculous accusations have been leveled against me recently, mainly by the German media. I have been accused of everything except cannibalism and beastiality, in other words sex with animals. If I were to reply to every single abnormal insinuation, I would be doing nothing but countering the perverse fantasies of press people who have obviously been watching too many Hollywood movies.

The nationally aware and historically enlightened Germans are clever enough to know what certain "media" understand by the term "truth." But critical-minded persons will notice that, despite the fact that the media "report" on me so often, I seldom have the opportunity, even in Germany, of uttering a few sentences by way of explanation. At the very most, strings of words are brought into play meant to "prove" exactly the opposite of what I really said. Sometimes my statements are mistranslated. Mostly down-right lies are said about me.

My good German friend Dr. Frey is now giving me the chance to speak out in plain terms, and without censorship. I am happy to take advantage of this opportunity in order to answer a question that must beset very many Germans: What is this man Vladimir Zhirinovskiy going to do when he becomes president of Russia, the biggest country in the world?

Will I destroy Germany with nuclear bombs or assume leadership of the world together with the Germans? People accuse me of both, often in the same breath. This is utter nonsense. The truth is that I want a strong Russia allied to a strong Germany. For this purpose, military strength is also required, or else we shall become a banana republic dictated to by foreign powers and ridiculed at our expense.

Indeed we wish to be fearsome, but only to those who want to attack us. I want a Russia that is respected in the world, a country that people cannot ignore whenever they want to. I envisage good cooperation with Germany in defense technology. A new armed struggle between the Germans and the Russians must be firmly ruled out.

What do I want in industry? As much private initiative as possible, as much state interventionism as necessary. We want none of the rapacious capitalism where international bosses pocket all the money and the masses simply vegetate in poverty. I think the social market economy concepts of Professor Ludwig Erhard, developed during World War II and implemented in many spheres since then, contain sound ideas.

As president, I will also maintain the best possible economic relations with the Germans. We Russians, with our enormous natural resources, and the Germans with their know-how are ideal partners. A German-Russian economic partnership would certainly bring an economic miracle to both countries.

Regarding social policy: I do not want a social system in Russia in which a wafer-thin minority acquires untold riches whilst the man in the street gets nothing. As far as the social security system is concerned, the policy of Bismarck is a pattern for me.

Regarding cultural policy: Here, I want a Russian self-awareness. I will certainly oppose the flooding of our country with the decadent trash that is showered upon us, mainly from the United States. The readers know what I mean, because the Germans are also recipients thereof. I am not at all concerned with sealing Russia off from foreign cultural influences completely, but there must not be an excessive flow of this cultural influence. Our great Tchaikovsky combined German romanticism with Russian national music, and thereby created masterpieces of Western music. That is just one of many examples.

Regarding foreign policy: He who is peaceful toward us has nothing to worry about, but he who wages war on us should know that Russia under my leadership will trample every invader underfoot. The Russians and Germans could establish an invincible defense union. The heroism of German and Russian soldiers, so often proved in history, will, together with a joint defense policy, frighten off any potential aggressor. Bismarck is also an example for me in foreign policy.

When the German-Russian partnership I am aiming toward has come about, we will be able to discuss

Kaliningrad and find a solution that conforms to German interests. The territorial change to Germany in 1945 was not a final act of history, and certainly not a final act of wisdom.

Just as his predecessors did before him, President Clinton said in his inaugural speech that the United States shall lead the world. We have no intention of adopting a similar role for Russia. We want a completely sovereign Russia that possesses its rightful place in our hemisphere. To quote the great Prussian King Frederick II, everyone should be happy in his own way.

One last word. I am not concerned with delivering empty sentences in a manner to which certain Russian and also German politicians have grown accustomed. I do not use underworld vocabulary that is understood by only a few initiated persons. I try to express myself in such a way that my people know what I want. The Germans, too, should know that I love my people and country above everything else, just as nationally-conscious Germans love their nation and their fatherland. If it is out of this love that I desire eternal friendship between the two great western peoples, the Germans and the Russians.

Zyuganov Denies Rumor on Joining Presidential Council

LD2703181094 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1700 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Gennadiy Zyuganov, leader of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, speaking on Sunday, denied rumors that he had received an offer to become a member of the Presidential Council. INTERFAX recalls that reports to this effect have appeared in several Russian mass media. They claimed, in particular, that there are plans to reform the Presidential Council in the near future by also including in it Gennadiy Burbulis, Yegor Gaydar, Ivan Rybkin, Mikhail Lapshin, and Valeriy Zorkin.

Interviewed by the agency, Gennadiy Zyuganov described these rumors as an attempt to draw into talks those who oppose the elimination of normal systems of government and the introduction of a dictatorship. In his view, its introduction is being prepared in the country.

Kozyrev Seeks Improved Legislature

LD2703153194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1435 GMT 27 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Vasilii Belousov, Dmitriy Gorokhov]

[Excerpt] Murmansk March 27 TASS—Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev believes that the improvement of legislature and the creation of a favorable investment climate all over the country is a way out of the difficult economic situation. This was declared during Kozyrev's

meeting with electors of the Murmansk region who elected Kozyrev to represent their interests in the State Duma.

In Kozyrev's opinion, the process of transition of Russia's northern regions to the market economy is going on slowly. During Kozyrev's meeting with electors it was pointed out that a canned fish factory and another plant were stopped in the region because of economic difficulties. Metal works of the Murmansk region and the Kolar nuclear power station have been operating to half of their design capacity. It may seem a paradox, but Murmansk, a traditional supplier of fish products for all Russia, is currently facing serious shortages of marine products.

The situation on the labour market has worsened as well. Every six adult resident of the region is expected to look for a job this year. Young people are abandoning northern areas which face an increasingly difficult problem of financing.

Kozyrev believes that a way out of the critical situation can be found by improving the legislature which can be applied to all northern regions of the country. He calls for better use of the regional potential of the Kolar peninsula. [passage omitted]

Yavlinskiy Considers 1996 Presidential Bid

LD2603224094 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 2155 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Well-known Russian economist Grigoriy Yavlinskiy, the leader of one of the State Duma factions, has said that he is prepared to take part in 1996 presidential election, but on one condition: They should be held in accordance with the law. He announced this on Friday, 25 March at a press conference in Nizhniy Novgorod.

Rally Prevented by Militia; Leader Detained

LD2603210794 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 2040 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] The press center of the Social Justice Movement [Dvizheniye za sotsialnuyu spravedlivost] interregional strike committee reports that the militia prevented the movement from holding a rally at the Mayakovskiy memorial today. The rally was to have been dedicated to defending the people's standard of living and preparing for the second all-Russian day of protest on 14 April. Even though Moscow's Taganskiy district court just a week ago ruled as illegal any ban on holding such meetings, the press center statement says, the chairman of the interregional strike committee Sergey Skvortsov was detained and taken to militia station No. 10.

Polls Show Belief in Possible Communist Return

LD2603175494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1347 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] More and more citizens of Russia believe that the return to the communist past is possible, an opinion poll

taken by the All-Russian Center of Public Opinion Studies (VCIOM) among 3,901 residents of cities and villages of the Russian Federation in mid-March shows.

Thus, according to the data provided by VCIOM to INTERFAX, to the question "Will the Communist Party be able to become a real political force in Russia in future?" in May 1993 15 percent said "yes", in March 1994—22 percent. The negative answer was given by 59 percent in May, and in March—45 percent. Those who found it difficult to answer were respectively 26 and 38 percent.

The respondents were also asked: "Will the Communist Party be able to return to power in future?" These are the answers:

	May 1993	March 1994
Yes	11	17
No	62	45
Undecided	27	38

Of those who consider the Communist party's return to power possible, half announced themselves supporters of a market reform. Experts believe that they do not favor the restoration of the old regime.

Military Issues

Spokesman Denies Reports of Biological Arms

LD2803104894 Moscow *ITAR-TASS in English* 1038
GMT 28 Mar 94

[By *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Anatoliy Yurkin]

[Text] Moscow March 28 TASS—Russia is neither developing nor producing biological weapons, a spokesman for the information and press department of the Defence Ministry told *ITAR-TASS* today, following reports in a number of foreign and Russian mass media organs, which maintain that Russia is allegedly continuing to implement a programme of creating biological weapons, specifically new "super-plague", to which the West has no antidote.

The foreign mass media quote reports of an anonymous intelligence source, which maintains that the programme is being implemented under the control of the Russian Defence Ministry.

In the opinion of experts from the Defence Ministry, it is rather astonishing that the forgery, circulated in the West in search of a sensation, was thoughtlessly repeated by some Russian mass media organs, which had ample opportunity to contact specialists and check the correctness of the reports.

Missile Troops Press Center on Shooting Incident

LD2603203094 Moscow *ITAR-TASS in English* 1842
GMT 26 Mar 94

[Report by *ITAR-TASS* correspondent]

[Text] Moscow 26 Mar, TASS—Automatic rifle fire near strategic missiles reported on 10 March at the Barnaul missile regiment posed no threat to nuclear arms, the press center of the Russian strategic missile troops told *ITAR-TASS* today.

When on duty near missile launching grounds ethnic-Dagestan Private F. Ashurbekov opened fire at the guard, shot two servicemen and wounded two others. A special group headed by regiment Commander Colonel A. Donetsk localized and rendered harmless the criminal.

A statement of the press center said "there was no threat to the missile launching grounds, the situation was under complete control of the command [sentence as received]; the service system and control over nuclear missiles in strategic missile troops guarantees nuclear safety under regular conditions and in various extreme situations."

"Missile complexes of the Russian strategic missile troops are reliably protected against unauthorized actions of personnel. In case of a threat of capture or shelling of nuclear arms corresponding measures would be taken.

"An order of the strategic missile troops' commander in chief was issued on the incident and criminal proceedings have been instituted. Preliminary information received by the investigation shows that Private Ashurbekov has mental disorder," says the statement.

Defense Ministry Denies Cutting Deputies

LD2503135194 Moscow *INTERFAX in English* 1220
GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The Russian defense minister will not have fewer deputies, Interfax was told by the Minister's spokeswoman Yelena Agapova.

She described as groundless the speculation on the alleged elimination of the air defense troops as an armed service.

In this connection Agapova said that various sorts of rumors carried by the media about the Ministry's leadership are being spread to deceive the public and to interfere with the Ministry's activities.

Federal Assembly

Duma Commission To Study Threat of Fascism

LD2503113194 Moscow *ITAR-TASS in English* 1052
GMT 25 Mar 94

[Report by *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Ivan Novikov]

[Text] Moscow 25 Mar, TASS—The State Duma included in the agenda today the issue on plans to unite the monetary systems of Russia and Belarus. The proposal of Aleksey Mitrofanov, member of the State Duma, was supported by the majority of the legislators.

The State Duma adopted a resolution by the roll-call voting on setting up a commission, which will prepare and hold parliamentary hearings, whose topic will be "threat of fascism in Russia." Yuliy Gusman from the Russia's Choice bloc, who suggested it, said that thugs professing fascist ideology are already walking without hindrance by the streets of Russian cities. "Today they look like clowns, but if we close our eyes to this problem, a situation may emerge, which will mean nothing but the revival of fascism," Gusman stressed.

Sergey Baburin responded to his words in an original way. He said that "the threat of fascism does exist, and it became evident in October 1993."

On the suggestion of Viktor Zelenkin from the Russia's Choice bloc the State Duma will hear a report of the group of deputies, who visited Vladivostok following the much-publicised removal from office of the city mayor. The State Duma decided as well to hear a report of a representative of the prosecutor-general's office in connection with accusations against Bella Kurkova, head of the St. Petersburg TV company.

Duma Passes Clarification of Amnesty Bill

LD2503132994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Friday morning [25 March], Russia's State Duma passed, by 268 votes against 10, with 4 abstentions, a formula for the realization of its earlier political and economic amnesty bill.

The Duma decided that criminal charges could not be dropped against those who in early October 1993 committed criminal offenses which were not part of what is known as the "Moscow developments" and had not yet turned sixty.

The Duma decided that everyone who had committed economic offenses before 31 December 1991, marking the formal breakup of the Soviet Union, were to be pardoned.

Also, criminal charges were to be dropped against those who resorted to fraud to appropriate state or public funds and against those who appropriated especially large sums. The Duma instructed courts of justice to see to it that this last decision is carried out.

Law on Publication of Official Documents Adopted

PM2803130594 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 26 Mar 94 First Edition p 2

[Report by Yevgeniy Skukin: "Red Carnation for Gaydar"]

[Excerpts] The State Duma yesterday adopted a federal law whose importance is truly hard to exaggerate—"On the Procedure for the Publication and Coming into Force of Federal Constitutional Laws, Federal Laws, and Acts of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly Chambers." Henceforth, under Article 5 of this law, the publication of federal constitutional laws, federal laws, and acts of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly chambers in VEDOMOSTI FEDERALNOGO SOBRANIYA ROSSIYSKOY FEDERATSII [Records of the Russian Federation Federal Assembly] and ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA will be official.

The State Duma rapidly adopted a decree on the complex and largely deadlocked issue of a political settlement of differences with the organs of power of Chechnya. [passage omitted]

Sergey Shakhrai, Russian Federation Government minister for nationalities affairs and regional policy, refuted the claim that Russia, despite everything, is feeding and will continue to feed Chechnya. No money was sent there in 1993, nor will any money be sent this year until there is a complete political settlement.

There was a very unusual episode at the very beginning of Friday's session. Vyacheslav Marychev, a Liberal Democratic Party of Russia deputy known for his activeness, handed the chairman a red carnation for presentation to the man celebrating his saint's day—Yegor Gaydar.

Regional Affairs

Preliminary Results of Elections in Russian Regions

Voter Turnout Varies in Regions

LD2803064194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0625 GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yevgeniy Belovitskiy and others]

[Text] Yuzhno-Sakhalinsk March 28 TASS—Elections to the Sakhalin regional дума (parliament) were recognised as valid, TASS learned from the vote-counting commission on Monday.

12 out of 16 дума members have been elected.

The polls failed in the southern Sakhalin constituency where four дума mandates were competed for. Only 18.3 per cent of the electorate came to the polls there.

However, the local дума with its 12 members has a quorum which enables it to work.

Irkutsk—45 per cent of the electorate came to the polls in the Irkutsk region in Siberia to elect the governor, local parliament, heads of administrations, cities and towns, urban and rural councils.

A vote on the main provisions of the charter of the region also took place.

Current Governor Yuriy Nozhikov retained his post.

Elections to local parliament were valid in 42 out of 45 constituencies, while the polls to local self-government bodies were valid in all constituencies.

Novgorod—Elections to local duma were declared valid in 19 out of 27 constituencies, according to Igor Zlatin, a member of the vote-counting commission.

An average of 37 per cent of voters came to the polls.

However, elections failed in the regional centre where turnout was insufficient in all of its eight constituencies.

Eight out of 19 elected members of the new local parliament are heads of city and district administrations.

Low Voter Turnout Reported

LD2803122994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1124
GMT 28 Mar 94

By ITAR-TASS correspondent Nikolay Styazhkin:

[Text] Stavropol March 28 TASS—Every seat in the Stavropol regional duma (legislature) was filled as a result of the weekend elections in the territory, ITAR-TASS was told by chairman of the territorial electoral commission Viktor Limanov when the tallying of the votes was finished.

Sceptics' forecasts were not proved false as an average of 40 per cent of registered Stavropol voters turned out for the secret balloting in the territory's 25 districts.

According to the preliminary results, the overwhelming majority of voters preferred those who had already had experience in running the territory's complicated economy and in implementing Russian reforms. The electoral mandate was won by almost all of the municipal and regional administration heads and law enforcement officials who nominated themselves as candidates to the territorial duma.

Neither the pro-reform Russia's Choice bloc nor the other social movements and political parties were able to gather enough votes to put one of their followers in the local duma, with the exception of a very few cases.

Bryansk—By ITAR-TASS correspondent Oleg Artyushin:

The preliminary results of the elections to the Bryansk regional duma are in. ITAR-TASS was told by the regional administration's working group that the elections were valid in six of the nine three-seat constituencies, resulting in the election of 18 of the 27 duma deputies. Despite that fact that the 27 spots were contested by 151 candidates, low voter turnout in the other three constituencies disqualified those elections.

Of the 18 new deputies in the regional duma, five are high officials in the regional administration, being the deputy head, the heads of the regional departments of internal affairs, agriculture, and labor and unemployment, as well as the chairman of the department of the regional consumer's union.

Five local administration heads and their deputies also got seats in the duma, along with three collective farm chairmen, two industrialists, a teacher, a doctor, and an agronomist.

Cheboksary—By ITAR-TASS correspondent Valentina Ivanova:

The voter turnout in Chuvashia's second round of local elections, held on Sunday, was around 40 per cent, ITAR-TASS was informed by the Central Electoral Commission. The names of 28 of the 47 deputies in the State Council were determined, while the remaining 19 seats are still vacant.

Samara—By ITAR-TASS correspondent Boris Belyakov:

Of the 25 deputy mandates in the Samara gubernatorial duma, only 14 were filled as a result of Sunday's local elections. The other 11 districts were plagued by very low voter turnout, and the elections were declared invalid. Overall, of the region's 2.5 [as published] registered voters, a little more than 30 per cent showed up at the polls.

Vladimir, Ivanovo Regions

LD2703205994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2051
GMT 27 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS]

[Text] Moscow March 27 TASS—Vladimir—Elections in the Vladimir region were completed in 17 out of 21 constituencies with the overall turnout of 30 per cent.

Kurgan—Elections were recognised valid in all constituencies of the Kurgan region with the overall turnout of 43.8 per cent.

Bryansk—The elections in the Bryansk region were completed with the overall turnout of 35.6 per cent. The highest turnout was reported in areas affected by the Chernobyl nuclear disaster.

Rostov-on-Don—Over 20 per cent of electors had cast their votes by 20:00 p.m. Moscow time in 39 out of 45 constituencies of the Rostov region.

Positive results have been reported from the Samara and Chuvashia regions with the 30.5 and 36 per cent turnout, respectively.

In the Ivanovo region, the turnout was low, except for rural regions. The turnout in the regional centre was 19.4

per cent, in some other towns - 21.4 per cent. A higher turnout was reported in rural areas, reaching 38.3 per cent.

Ryazan, Nizhniy Novgorod, Tambov, Voronezh

LD2803085194 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0803 GMT 28 Mar 94

By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Kakovkin:

[Text] Ryazan [no date as received]—According to the results of the March 27 elections to local representative authorities in the Ryazan region, summed up today, only 12 out of the needed 19 deputies to the regional duma have been elected. Elections were recognised as valid in all the rural constituencies, while the minimum turnout of 35 per cent was not registered at any of the constituencies in the city or Ryazan itself. This is why only one deputy to the regional duma was elected there.

According to the current regulations, repeated elections may be held there no sooner than in three months. So far as the future of the regional duma is concerned, a final decision will be taken by the regional electoral commission today after the final count of votes. The decision will hardly be positive, because one more deputy is needed to make the quorum.

Nizhniy Novgorod—By ITAR-TASS correspondent Evald Kessariysky:

The results of elections to the representative bodies of power were rather promising in that region. An average of 32 per cent of electors took part in the voting. 32 deputies were elected to the regional legislative assembly, and repeated elections will be held in 13 constituencies.

The turnout was rather high in the city of Nizhniy Novgorod. According to preliminary results, 25 deputies were elected there. Repeated elections will be held in nine constituencies.

Tambov—By ITAR-TASS correspondent Aleksandr Russkiy:

Elections have been recognised as valid in the Tambov region with a population of 1.5 million. Chairman of the Regional Electoral Commission Nikolay Vorobev told ITAR-TASS. 43.3 per cent of electors took part in the voting. Thirty deputies were elected to the regional duma and 16 deputies—to the city duma. A Tambov mayor was also elected for the first time ever. According to the preliminary information, the incumbent mayor of Tambov Valeriy Koval, 42, leader of local democrats, was elected to that post. He defeated a candidate from Rutskoy's party and a representative of communists.

Voronezh—By ITAR-TASS correspondent Anatoliy Starukhin:

Residents of the Voronezh region, and especially urban dwellers, did not show much enthusiasm about the

Sunday elections to local representative bodies of power. According to preliminary results, only 23 per cent of electors took part in elections to the Voronezh municipal council, and elections can be recognised as valid only in seven constituencies out of 17. Turnout was a little higher during the elections to the regional duma, because residents of rural areas took part in them. A total figure is 42 per cent. However, the needed minimum was not reached at ten urban constituencies, and repeated elections will have to be held there. Elections seem to be valid in the remaining 35 constituencies, mostly in rural areas.

Murmansk Oblast Elections Invalid

LD2703213194 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 2100 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] In the Murmansk Oblast the recent elections to the oblast Duma were invalid, because only 17 percent of the voters came to the polling stations.

In Murmansk itself only about 15 percent of the inhabitants of this large port city took part in the voting.

Yeltsin Suspends Krasnoyarsk Region Resolution

LD2603192794 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1843 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent]

[Text] Moscow, 26 Mar—The press service of the Russian president has reported that in keeping with part two of Article 85 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation, Russian President Boris Yeltsin today issued an edict suspending the 22 February 1994 resolution issued by the Krasnoyarsk Kray administration "On the Referendum on the Draft Law of Krasnoyarsk Kray 'On the Fundamentals of Direct Democracy and of the Structure of State Power in Krasnoyarsk Kray.'"

The edict notes that the inclusion of the draft law, which determines the kray's status, in the kray referendum violates Article 10, part two of Article 66 and part one of Article 77 of the Constitution of the Russian Federation.

Chechnya Will Sign Treaty if Recognized by Russia

LD2503180994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1540 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] In Friday's interview with Interfax Chechnya's Secretary of State Aslambek Akbulatov said Chechnya was ready to sign a treaty with the Russian Federation on the condition that it was recognized as a sovereign state. The Chechen republic attached no other conditions to the conclusion of a treaty with Russia.

If it were suggested, as a preliminary condition, that Chechnya be regarded as a constituent part of the Russian Federation, it would make no sense for Grozny to send a delegation to Moscow, said Akbulatov.

He continued that, detrimental as they were to the Russian interests, the political games around Chechnya would inevitably produce a new Russian-Caucasian war, and claimed that President Dudayev was concerned exactly about that possibility.

Akbulatov dismissed, as an obvious journalistic error, reports that the Moscow-based negotiations had been broken-off and the Chechens were to blame for it. He

said the negotiations were continuing and no chance would be overlooked for a reasonable compromise. The Chechen and Russian delegations were to meet again on Saturday, March 26.

Chechnya was seeking the closest and neighborly relationship with Russia, said Akbulatov, with sovereignty as a safeguard against the possible repetition of an attempt to exterminate the Chechens.

International Affairs

Crimean Independent Military Policy Found Invalid

LD2503135594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1220 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] [Crimean] President Meshkov's decree on Crimea's independent military policy is illegal, and for this reason its implementation would be against the law. This is said in a statement released by the Ukrainian Defence Ministry's press-service on March 24. The statement notes that "Crimeans must be drafted, Ukrainian troops be deployed, and servicemen be trained in line with the Ukrainian Defence Ministry procedures and in the interests of Ukraine's defence potential."

"Pressure by President Yuriy Meshkov on the Crimean Army Commander and open threats are inadmissible," the statement notes.

According to a decree earlier signed by Meshkov, Crimean citizens will be drafted for service exclusively on the territory of the peninsula.

CIS Economic Union Consideration Delayed

LD2503210294 Kiev UNIAN in Ukrainian 1820 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Kiev [No dateline as received]—On 24 March a debate on Ukraine's accession to the CIS economic union treaty, with the rights of a full-fledged and not an associate member, was taking place at the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine upon the initiative of Vice Prime Minister Valentyn Landyk. Valentyn Landyk explained the necessity of acceding by the existence of customs barriers which "hamper the movement of commodities within CIS" as a result of which "Ukraine is losing market outlets". Deputy Minister of Economy Leonid Minin, and Mykhaylo Umanets, chairman of the State Committee of Ukraine for the use of nuclear energy, who, in particular, referred to Ukraine's dependence on Russian nuclear fuel, supported him.

Vice Prime Minister Vasyl Yevtukhov, Minister of the Environment Yuriy Kostenko, and Ihor Podolev, the president's adviser on credit and financial issues, were resolutely against Ukraine's accession to the CIS economic union treaty with the rights of a full-fledged member. Vasyl Yevtukhov reminded those present that earlier, when the issue on the accession to this union was raised, Ukraine made eight reservations which were to be taken into account. Ihor Podolev remarked that this treaty should be considered as a political rather than economic document and that it "gives nothing" to the economic integration. He also emphasized that it is possible to accede to the treaty only taking into account the current situation but not prospects for the future. In his opinion, such a union will be ineffective "because the CIS markets will not contribute to improving the quality of products".

Yevhen Marchuk, head of the Security Service of Ukraine, also warned against this step in view of the negative consequences for the economic independence of Ukraine in 5 to 10 years time.

Ukraine's Foreign Minister Anatoliy Zlenko reminded of the foreign political consequences for Ukraine in its relations with the West European countries in case it joins the treaty, in particular, in view of the signing of an agreement with the European Union on 23 March. He was inclined to the opinion that it was necessary to analyze the text of the treaty in detail. Acting Prime Minister Yukhym Zvyahilskyy agreed with the proposal made by Anatoliy Zlenko and proposed that this issue be considered later.

On 25 March chief of the department for relations with the CIS countries at the Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine Kostyantyn Petrov remarked during his conversation with a UNIAN correspondent that "talks to the effect that Ukraine should fully accede to the treaty have long been in progress, some people really believe that Ukraine will have more opportunities within a single economic space. However, those documents are being worked out so far which relate only to Ukraine's associate membership in the economic union." The final say, as Kostyantyn Petrov emphasized, belongs to the president.

Limited Partnership for Peace Role Timely

LD2503190594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1713 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Ukraine is prepared to play a limited role in the NATO Partnership for Peace program, as long as this does not call for too much resources, assistant Ukrainian Defense Minister Vadym Grechanyanov told a news conference in the Ukrainian Foreign Ministry.

He said that Ukraine is short of money for fully-fledged cooperation with NATO. However, the participation of one or two representatives of the Ukrainian general staff is possible in planning training operations.

Grechanyanov said that Ukraine's involvement in peace-keeping operations in Bosnia-Herzegovina effectively means participation in the Partnership for Peace program.

A NATO delegation stayed in Ukraine for several days. It studied possible practical steps for cooperation with NATO. The delegation met the chief of Ukrainian general staff Anatoliy Lopata and Deputy Ukrainian Foreign Minister Borys Tarasyuk.

NSAU, NASA To Cooperate in Space Research

LD2303212494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1935 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] The negotiations between the National Space Agency of Ukraine (NSAU) and an official delegation of the U.S. space agency (NASA) ended in Kiev Wednesday producing a joint declaration.

According to the document, the two sides will look into the possibilities for cooperation in space research, physics of circumterrestrial space, the mutual impact between the sun and the earth, space-based scanning of the earth, space biology and aeronautics. In part, the declaration proposed using the Ukrainian scientific vessels Yuriy Gagarin and Academician Korolev.

According to NSAU Director General Vladimir Gorbulin, the vessels were used to maintain space communications in times when the former Soviet Union still existed.

"Nowadays they are out of service and are a heavy burden for the Ukrainian Defense Ministry," he pointed out.

Gorbulin said the talks failed to touch on the possibility of bilateral cooperation in producing spacecraft and using space transportation systems which is of great importance for Ukraine.

In his opinion, that was caused by Ukraine's failure in 1992 to back the U.S. proposal to expose its missile technologies to international control. At the moment, as many as 26 countries have signed the agreement.

Environment Ministry To Cooperate With U.S., Holland

WS2403182194 Kiev VECHIRNIY KYIV in Ukrainian 22 Mar 94 p 3

[Report by Fayina Zlotnyk: "We Will Get \$6 Million More"]

[Text] The Ukrainian Environmental Protection Ministry press center reported that Yuriy Kostenko, minister for protection of Ukrainian environment, returned from an official trip to the Netherlands and the United States.

During his stay in the Netherlands, a memorandum was signed on ecologic cooperation between the Ukrainian Ministry of Environmental Protection, and the Ministry of Construction, Territorial Planning and Environment, the Ministry of Transportation, Public Works and Water Management, and the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishing and Nature of the Netherlands.

This memorandum provides for cooperation in the sphere of ecologic management and the protection of air, water, and wildlife. It was agreed that a working cooperation program for 1994-95 will be approved in early April.

In the United States, where Yuriy Kostenko was invited to visit the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, he met with officials from this agency, the World Bank, the Agency for International Development, the Department of Energy, and the U.S. Congress.

The U.S. officials displayed a deep interest in cooperation between Ukraine and the United States in the sphere of ecology, and examined a package of proposals about urgent environmental protection measures, such

as the creation of modern laboratories monitoring radiation levels and water quality, recycling of toxic waste, launching educational television programs, and finally establishing an informational and educational center. The American side is planning to allocate \$6 million to implement the above projects. This will be an addition to the \$500,000 that the World Bank granted the Environmental Ministry last year to carry out a project called "Preservation of Biological Diversity of Carpathians." The American colleagues are ready to continue to share with us their experience and technologies, and want to train our specialists and provide financial assistance.

Kiev Oblast, Chinese Province Sign Accord

AU2303202094 Kiev HOLOS UKRAYINY in Ukrainian 22 Mar 94 p 6

[Unattributed report: "Ukraine—China: the First Agreement Signed Between Regions"]

[Text] An oblast state administration delegation headed by presidential representative in Kiev Oblast Ivan Kapshtyk returned home from the Chinese Hopeh Province. In view of the great significance of establishing and expanding mutually advantageous economic, scientific-technological, and cultural partnership between Kiev Oblast and the Hopeh Province, an agreement on friendship and cooperation between them was signed.

"Together with deputy head of the government of the province Han Nanpen [name as transliterated], we have made a constructive step toward cooperation at the level of regions," said I. Kapshtyk. "Both we and they are very interested in investing in joint enterprises that are being created, in other forms of entrepreneurship, in the light and foodstuffs industry, in the sphere of powder metallurgy, and trade.

Kuchma on Causes of Ukraine's Ills, Remedies

PM2403144994 Moscow IZVESTIYA in Russian 23 Mar 94 p 4

[Report of interview with former Ukrainian Premier Leonid Kuchma in Odessa by Leonid Kapelyushnyy; date not given: "Leonid Kuchma: Ukraine's Current Leadership Dangerous for Country and People"]

[Text] Odessa—Leonid Kuchma's gloomy prophecy is being fulfilled: Inaction is leading the Ukrainian economy toward destruction. Does he feel to blame for the fact that in his time as head of government he was unable to transform the situation?

"I have often regretted that I became prime minister, and even more so that I did not resign in May 1993, having satisfied myself, six months into the job, that parliament and president seemed to be all in favor of reforms and economic recovery—provided nothing changed," Kuchma says. "Unfortunately, economics also turned out to be politics.... Until the land and means

of production become a commodity, scarcely any government will be able to stabilize the financial system and switch the economy to the track of market relationships."

Leonid Danilovich often cites examples: When the government, according to the powers it had received, adopted its first decree on transferring farmstead plots to private ownership, such a fuss was kicked up that you would have thought that the nation's taproot had been cut right through. The attempt to sell uncompleted construction projects was also blocked—its value was put at 7 trillion rubles. And every time Kuchma made an assault on "the fundamentals" he met with more than a mild rebuff.... His favorite comparison: "They wanted us to walk a narrow path between parliament and president and imagine that we were on the high road of reforms."

The former premier considers the National Bank to be the main culprit for hyperinflation in Ukraine—its credit policy is "direct sabotage against the state," in which the whole banking system participates. The cabinet had no chance of controlling corruption and rampant crime because all the power ministries were not under its jurisdiction. It was Kuchma who uncovered the monstrous abuses involving oil resources and openly accused the structures of state power of corruption and links with mafia circles; serious evidence, including evidence of violations of currency and financial discipline in the Black Sea Shipping Line, was passed on to the General Prosecutor's Office, but nothing came of it.

Having resigned, Leonid Kuchma "held back" for long enough. The president took charge of the government; all power, as Leonid Danilovich had been long and unsuccessfully seeking, was finally concentrated in one pair of hands. But the destructive processes in the economy continued. Industrial production fell by 36 percent in the first month of the new year; metallurgical and chemical enterprises are shutting down; the Donbass is in the grip of profound crisis. And Kuchma has broken his silence....

"The Ukrainian national economy has become hostage to politics and to political intriguers. Today's economy has nothing in common with the needs of society. The decimation of industry being carried out by the Kravchuk-Zvyahilskyy government, the monopolization of the entire hard-currency sphere, the destruction of the state's financial and credit system—this is being carried out in the interests of mafia and semi-mafia groups, and not in the interests of the Ukrainian people. The political leadership's inability to make state decisions is spilling over into heightened activity at the level of petty political intrigues. Executive power in Ukraine as a system of real government has already fallen victim to these intrigues; next in line is the Ukrainian state itself. I categorically assert that the current Ukrainian leadership is dangerous for the country and the people."

In his time the new premier (the third in the last few years) Kuchma set about building diplomatic bridges

between Ukraine and nearby foreign parts. Leonid Danilovich brought back packages of specific accords, aimed at restoring shattered economic ties, from oil-rich Tyumen, from Turkmenia [Turkistan] and Kazakhstan, from Kirghizia [Kyrgyzstan] and Uzbekistan, from Belorussia [Belarus] and other fellow republics of the former Union. Although even then he said that Ukraine's problems were only 35 percent due to the disruption of ties and 65 percent due to internal disorder, poor discipline, and slovenliness. Today too he also believes that the head of state, instead of (or as well as) going on expeditions to the West, where they have difficulty making us out, should visit our near neighbors and negotiate—on payments and deliveries of energy resources and raw materials. Incidentally, Kuchma never tires of repeating that the state's main problem is its balance of payments deficit. He cites a figure—\$13.5 billion. This sum is mainly due to the cost of oil, gas, and nonferrous metals for Ukrainian industry.

"Many of Ukraine's problems are offshoots of Belovezhskaya Forest," the former premier believes. "In the seventies Ukraine invested around 100 billion foreign currency rubles in the development of the West Siberian oil and gas complex. And it did not expect to receive oil resources before the end of perestroika.... Not to mention the fact that Ukraine sent around 500,000 of its citizens to exploit the new territories, citizens who are to this day extracting oil and gas in Tyumen."

Social psychologists believe that a person's activity between the ages of 30 to 35 has a decisive influence on the formation of the individual. At this age the foundations are laid which determine behavior in subsequent life. What was the 30-year-old Leonid Kuchma up to? Building rockets and teaching how to fly them. The future director of "Yuzhmash," the top-secret defense enterprise, was at home in the circle of the engineering elite and guided space crews into orbit from blast-off. He was noticed and appreciated by Korolev, Yangel....

In two years of sitting in parliament no one saw him standing in line for the microphone, but the command personnel of Ukrainian industry well knew the worth of the taciturn Deputy Kuchma. He was confirmed in the post of premier without the tedious procedure of hearings and discussions—within 15 minutes. In May 1993, as a rocket specialist, he made parliament ponder deeply; as a result, the treaty with Russia on nuclear weapons was not ratified. Kuchma does not regret this even now. Kuchma's stance vis-a-vis Leonid Kravchuk's triumph during his recent visit to Washington is also curious.

"I have the suspicion that we are calling an outstanding achievement what is no more than a protocol of intentions signed by Ukraine, Russia, and the United States. Essentially, President Clinton has given his consent to our looking for purchasers of our uranium in the United States. And I do not see in this any guarantee that Ukraine will receive compensation for its nuclear warheads.

"The removal of nuclear missiles from alert status is a complex and expensive program. According to the assessments of U.S. specialists, it will cost Ukraine roughly \$3 billion. We were initially promised \$170 million, and now Leonid Makarovich has come back in triumph with \$700,000. You can count the difference yourself."

"Will the problem be resolved if, with the aid of U.S. specialists, we remove the warheads, send them to Russia, and even receive the fuel elements back? No—it will be the prelude to a major headache. There are 130 liquid-propellant missiles in Ukraine today whose guarantees have expired. For one type of fuel—gintil—we do not have the reprocessing technology. What will we do with it? A further point. It will be necessary to blow up every silo to a depth of 8 meters. Can anyone in Ukraine imagine what the explosion of just one missile silo signifies? I think not. A plant to neutralize missiles removed from alert status is necessary; moreover, these missiles will contain residual fuel, which promises considerable unpleasantness. Do not imagine that things will be any better or easier with solid-fueled missiles. The first stage of these missiles consists of a 50-tonne 'cigar.' Special conditions with a temperature regime of from 5 to 35 degrees are needed in order to store them. We do not have the technology to recycle them. We do not have a plant in which to do so. If we take the step of burning the solid fuel in the open we will present Ukraine with another Chernobyl.

"I am afraid that after Ukraine has been praised for seeking nuclear-free status, they will wash their hands of us, and we will be left to face this gravest of problems on our own."

Leonid Kuchma is extremely cautious over predictions when it comes to personalities. But he considers Leonid Kravchuk's further continuation in the office of president as problematic, and believes that a decision on his part to voluntarily resign his post would be timely.

Kuchma sees the solution to the crisis in uniting healthy forces in a future parliament. Together with Vladimir Grinev (many political commentators consider this alliance to be very successful and reliable) he has set up the Interregional Bloc of Reforms, whose basis is the Ukrainian Union of Entrepreneurs and Industrialists headed by Kuchma. The bloc offers Ukraine guidelines for a future political policy—the creation of a mechanism for mutual aid and mutual support with all the CIS countries, and with Russia first and foremost, and the creation of conditions for jointly overcoming the crisis and defending geopolitical and geoeconomic interests by combined efforts.

"Nowadays no one will survive alone. This is already understood by Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belarus. But the current Ukrainian leadership does not yet understand this."

CIS as Subject of International Law Rejected

LD2603122594 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 0900 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Ukraine comes out against recognizing the Commonwealth of Independent States as a regional organization, against recognizing the CIS as a subject of international law, and against recognizing the right of the CIS to carry out peace-making operations. Volodymyr Handohiy, acting charge d'affaires of Ukraine's permanent mission at the United Nations declared this at the UN General Assembly during the course of a debate on a resolution on granting CIS the status of an observer at the General Assembly. In particular he said: Ukraine joins the consensus, as far as the given resolution is concerned, only in the sense that the status of a CIS observer at the General Assembly will be officially granted only to those community countries that signed and ratified the Commonwealth charter and became co-authors of the above draft resolution.

National Affairs

Parliamentary Elections Held 27 Mar

LD2703104894 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian 1000 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] A report of the Central Electoral Commission has just been brought into our studio. Here is the first data on the progress of voting: 20 percent of the electorate have already voted in Sevastopol, Crimea; 34 percent in Zaporozhye; 40 percent in Ivano-Frankovsk; and more than 50 percent in Chernovtsy Oblast.

The Central Electoral Commission also reported that 186 candidates have withdrawn their candidacies, thus facilitating the task facing the electors or, maybe, disappointing some of them.

According to the Central Electoral Commission, preliminary data on the number of those who voted will be announced at 1600 and 2000.

Kravchuk Interviewed at Poll

LD2703143494 Kiev Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian 1000 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Ninety minutes ago, Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk voted in the election of people's deputies of Ukraine at polling station No. 4 of the Kiev central constituency No. 22. After he voted, the chief of state answered several questions from Ukrainian and foreign journalists.

[Begin recording] [Correspondent of Russian news agency MOSKVA] What kind of new Ukrainian parliament would you like to see and where should it lead the country?

[Kravchuk] I would like it to be responsible, reform-oriented, and professional so that it can lead the country

along the way of reforms, democracy, friendship, cooperation, and partnership with all states of the world, so that it will lead the country to good- neighborly relations with those countries which are our [word indistinct].

[Unidentified correspondent] [passage indistinct]

[Kravchuk] I say, we must follow the way of reforms, reforms only.

[Unidentified correspondent] Do you have a market economy in mind?

[Kravchuk] A market economy, reforms along the way toward a market. There is no alternative here. You know, those states which [words indistinct], as they say in Ukrainian [words indistinct], they are following the road toward a market. This refers to Russia, to Belarus, and to other states. Some of them made rather good progress and others were less successful, however, they all are moving along the road of reforms. It seems to me that this question is connected with the following: There are forces which think or understand things differently [word indistinct]. But on the whole [words indistinct].

[Unidentified correspondent] Recently you expressed doubt that there would be a full-blooded parliament as a result of the election. Will you ask for additional legal powers? Will this end up with presidential rule?

[Kravchuk] Why? I said that parliament, as a matter of fact, could assemble if 300 deputies were elected but that it would not be a full-blooded parliament because it will lack 150 deputies. These 150 deputies make up one third of the entire number of deputies in parliament, so this means that 12 million citizens would not be represented in parliament—12 million of the adult population or 17 million if we take into account the entire population. Therefore, the parliament which does not represent the whole of Ukraine cannot make decisions. And then, to be frank, let us imagine that there are 300. There would need to be an ideal situation for 300 deputies to vote for any decision unanimously. It means that constitutional decisions [words indistinct].

[Unidentified correspondent] Leonid Makarovych, the population of Ukraine has been waiting impatiently for this day. A new era, so to speak, is beginning in the life of Ukraine. Do you link this election with the fact that Ukraine will open a new, so to say, page?

[Kravchuk] I think today will not yet show whether a new era begins or not. This will probably be determined after the parliament is elected, if it is elected. I would like this to happen. Then, after it assembles and proclaims its concept, its program, its attitude toward reforms, democracy, and transformations, only after this it will be possible to say whether the new era has begun or not. Today this is our wish only. I hope the people who come to the polling stations want this to happen. Whether this happens or not will depend on how they vote, who they vote for, and on the level of responsibility of those who are elected to parliament and their attitude toward this people.

[Unidentified correspondent] [passage indistinct]

[Kravchuk] I think that, no matter how events develop there, Crimea will be with Ukraine and will tackle all issues with Ukraine. Here is an interesting fact. Water has been supplied to Crimea from Ukraine, where they opened the valve, seeds for the sowing campaign have been delivered from Ukraine, and everything is being delivered from Ukraine. So far... [pauses] Not much effort is needed, for example, to reset the hands of the clock. Not much effort is needed for this. However, one needs to exert efforts so as to switch over to reforms, to economic programs. So far, this is a matter of resetting clock hands, voting, and so on—that is to say, this is being done so far at the level of political battles.

I always say: Let us deal with the economy. Crimea lives together with Ukraine. I do not believe that the people of Crimea, the population of Crimea, will display an irresponsible attitude toward this action [word indistinct]. After all, everything will depend on whether reforms develop in Crimea or not, whether the life of the people improves or not.

[Unidentified correspondent] What if the situation becomes worse?

[Kravchuk] I believe we will not allow this to happen. [end recording]

Regional Figures Updated

LD2703152494 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1345 GMT
27 Mar 94

[Text] Kiev, 27 March—The press center "Election-94" reported that, according to data provided by Valentyn Kyrnenko, deputy chairman of the Central Electoral Commission, at 1200, 36.99 percent of the electorate took part in the voting in Ukraine (excluding Kiev). He also provided data for separate oblasts:

Poltava Oblast	50.74 percent
Volyn Oblast	47.6 percent
Khmelnitskiy Oblast	56.3 percent
Crimea	25 percent
Kherson Oblast	31.9 percent
Kiev Oblast	42 percent
Nikolayev Oblast	47.2 percent
Cherkassy Oblast	47.5 percent
Rovno Oblast	50.4 percent
Ivano-Frankovsk Oblast	39 percent
Chernovtsy Oblast	50.8 percent
Sevastopol	20 percent
Zhitomir Oblast	44.5 percent
Kirovograd Oblast	45 percent
Ternopol Oblast	49.6 percent

Under 30 Percent of Crimeans Vote in Morning

LD2703153394 Moscow *ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian* 1140 GMT 27 Mar 94

[By *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Yefim Shvartsman]

[Excerpts] Simferopol, 27 Mar—According to data from the Central Electoral Commission, by 1200 Moscow time [0800 GMT], 531,292 voters, or 26.58 percent of the overall electorate, had voted in the Republic of Crimea, Viktor Alsufev, chairman of the Crimean Central Electoral Commission reported. According to the Commission, the turnout at these elections is lower than in the elections for the president of the Republic of Crimea at the end of January, when, for instance, by 1200 43.4 per cent of the electorate had voted already. [passage omitted] But all of that does not give rise to fears and the elections will take place. The election turnout in the rural rayons is the highest. There are rayons where over 40 percent of the electorate have voted, in particular in the Pervomayskiy [Pervomayskoye], Razdolnenskiy [Radzolnoye], and Sovetskiy rayons. Almost 20 percent of the electorate have voted in the city of Simferopol, and 21.45 per cent of the electorate in the city of Sevastopol—the Black Sea Fleet base.

As is known, elections to the Supreme Soviet of Ukraine are taking place simultaneously in Crimea and their are no instances of mass refusal to take part in the elections. A poll is also being carried out in which the people of Crimea have to express their attitude about Crimea building mutual relations with Russia and also about dual citizenship.

Sergey Nikulin, spokesman of the President of the Republic of Crimea on relations with the Central Electoral Commission, reported that the poll is being conducted in an organized manner and the poll ballot papers are being given out along with the ballot papers for voting on elections to the parliament of Crimea and the parliament of Ukraine.

John Finerti [name as received], the CSCE representative, gives the same assessment at the first stage of today's elections in Crimea. He said that his first impression from his acquaintance with the organization of the elections and his visits to a number of polling stations makes it possible to say that everything is proceeding as normal so far.

Over 70 Percent Vote in Dnepropetrovsk

LD2703160894 Kiev *Ukrayinske Radio First Program Network in Ukrainian* 1500 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Over 70 percent of the electorate have voted by now in Dnepropetrovsk Oblast, our correspondent reports. Thus, the election has taken place in this region.

Plyushch Rejects Postponement of Elections

LD2703161694 Moscow *INTERFAX in English* 1504 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Ukraine's parliamentary speaker has criticized President Leonid Kravchuk's proposal to postpone the next presidential election.

Ivan Plyushch said to reporters in Kiev on Sunday that there were no reasons to put off the election, scheduled for June 26. "This hullabaloo is groundless and pointless. The election is feared by those who don't believe they'll be elected," he said.

Kravchuk has repeatedly insisted that the presidential election be postponed, because, he said, holding it before the new legislature convened could lead to a confrontation in society and paralyze authority.

Commenting on the president's statement that the next parliament, to be elected on March 27, may not be a "full-blooded" legislature, Plyushch said, "There are too many specialists who have not only made an analysis but have drawn conclusions as well." "I will refrain from making such conclusions." "The parliament will be full-blooded," he said.

Acting Premier Casts Vote

LD2703194494 Kiev *Radio Ukraine World Service in Ukrainian* 1900 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Acting Prime Minister Yukhym Zvyahilskyy voted in Donetsk. Speaking on Ukraine's relations with the CIS countries, he told journalists that Ukraine must join the economic union, and said: There is no other way.

We must take part in the Commonwealth on equal and mutually beneficial terms, and work to the mutual benefit of all CIS countries, Yukhym Zvyahilskyy said.

ITAR-TASS Reports on Elections

LD2703203194 Moscow *ITAR-TASS in English* 2004 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Report by *ITAR-TASS* correspondent Anatoliy Gordeyev]

[Text] Donetsk 27 Mar, TASS—The turnout in parliamentary elections in Ukraine was reported to be on the rise on Sunday afternoon. In the morning, the number of electors taking part in the polls was around 38 per cent, but by 1600 Kiev time, the turnout exceeded 60 per cent, and by 1800 local time, parliamentary elections had been successfully completed in 16 Ukrainian regions.

The Crimea, the Donetsk and the Lugansk region, where apart from elections, the population was polled on a number of vitally important problems for these regions, were in the focus of attention of the Ukrainian Central Electoral Commission.

Officials from the Donetsk and Lugansk regional councils told ITAR-TASS that questions put on ballot papers of a deliberative poll gave more impetus to the polls, encouraging electors to express their opinion. As a result, the elections in the Donetsk and Lugansk region had been completed by 1800 with the registered turnout of 59 and 66 per cent, respectively.

Incidentally, acting Ukrainian Prime Minister Yefim Zvyahilsky, who voted in the city of Donetsk, was frank about his attitude to a question put to the deliberative poll. Touching on Ukraine's relations with CIS countries, he told journalists that there is no other way for Ukraine but to join the economic union. "We must take part in the Commonwealth on equal and mutually advantageous terms and must work on a mutually advantageous basis with all CIS countries," Zvyahilsky said.

Several hours before polling stations closed today, elections in 19 Ukrainian regions, including Poltava, Chernovitsk, Rovno, Zhitomir, Vinnitsa, Kirovograd, Lugansk, Dnepropetrovsk, Volyn, Sumy, Carpathian, Nikolayev, Ivano-Frankovsk, Khmel'nitsk, Kherson, Lvov, Kharkov, Donetsk, Kiev regions and the Crimea, had been completed with the overall turnout of 50.6 per cent out of 76 per cent registered electors.

According to preliminary reports, the overall turnout in parliamentary elections in Ukraine was 60 per cent.

Overall Election Turnout Over 67 Percent

LD2703204094 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 2008 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Report by UKRINFORM correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Kiev, 27 Mar—Over 67 percent of the electorate took part in today's elections of people's deputies in Ukraine. In accordance with the law, this means that the election is valid, a UKRINFORM correspondent was told at the Central Electoral Commission.

The highest turnout was recorded in Ivano-Frankovsk, Lvov, and Poltava Oblasts, where between 84 and 92 percent of those eligible to vote came to the polling booths. In oblasts throughout the country, between 70 and 76 percent of the electorate took part in the voting, while in eight other oblasts the turnout was between 60 and 69 percent. Over 50 percent of the electorate cast their votes for parliamentary candidates in the Republic of Crimea.

According to preliminary reports, the elections were valid in 445 out of 450 constituencies.

Details of National Voting Turnout

LD2703220894 Kiev UNIAK in Ukrainian 2014 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Simferopol, 27 Mar—As Viktor Alsufyev, chairman of the Central Electoral Commission of the

Republic of Crimea said, as of 1600 [1300 GMT], 911,000 voters (46.68 percent of the total) voted in the elections to the Supreme Council of Crimea. Nine hundred and nine thousand voters took part in the elections to the Supreme Council of Ukraine. However, Mr. Alsufyev stressed that this was the number of those who received ballot papers and not those who had dropped them into the ballot boxes.

According to the personal observation of the Crimean Central Electoral Commission, the recommendation by President Meshkov for Crimea not to vote in the elections to the Ukrainian Supreme Council but to take the ballot papers home, was being partially carried out at polling stations.

The elections to the Supreme Council of Crimea in multi-member national constituencies have taken place. By 1600 71.2 percent had voted in the Crimean Tatar constituency; 63.5 percent in the Armenian constituency; 45.6 percent in the Bulgarian constituency; 57.5 percent in the Greek constituency, and 57.9 percent in the German constituency. According to information from the Central Electoral Commission, elections to the Supreme Council of Crimea had taken place practically in all rural constituencies. Viktor Alsufyev said that there had been no information about significant violations that could have influenced the course of the elections.

Plyushch, Khmara, Kuchma Elected

LD2803092994 Moscow Radiostantsiya Ekho Moskvy in Russian 0800 GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] Over 70 percent of the electorate took part in parliamentary elections in Ukraine yesterday. The population was most active in western regions. Only in four of the 450 districts were the elections invalid. According to information up to 2100 on 27 March, the elections in Crimea to the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet were invalid in only one electoral district.

INTERFAX says that, according to preliminary information, former Supreme Soviet Speaker Ivan Plyushch, Rukh leader Vyacheslav Chornovil, former Deputy Prime Minister Viktor Pynzenik, and leader of the Ukrainian conservatives Stepan Khmara were elected as deputies to the new parliament in the first round of voting. Leonid Kuchma, leader of the inter-regional reform bloc, got the biggest number of votes, with 91 percent.

In Kuchma's opinion, the results of the elections, as well as the situation with the republic's basic law, do not allow presidential elections to be postponed to a later date. I will remind you that they should take place in Ukraine in June 1994. President Leonid Kravchuk has said several times that the election must be postponed. He is worried that a power vacuum could arise during the presidential candidates' election campaign, while the new parliament has still not been formed. In his turn,

Leonid Kuchma pointed out that this is an attempt by the president to delay a civilized turnover in all branches of power.

The Crimean Supreme Soviet elections were valid. Over 60 percent of the electorate took part. Simferopol was least active of all, while the electoral districts where Crimean Tatars and Armenians live were most active. I will remind you that a referendum on relations with Ukraine and dual citizenship on the peninsula was held simultaneously with the elections. The results of the poll are still unknown.

Final Results Expected 29 March

LD2803100394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0951
GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Nekrasova]

[Text] Lvov March 28 TASS—Elections may be regarded as valid in all the 450 one-seat constituencies of Ukraine, chairman of the Central Electoral Commission Ivan Yemets announced today in the morning. The last reports came on Sunday night from the Republic of the Crimea, specifically, Sevastopol and Yalta, where the voter turnout was 50.9 and 51.8 percent respectively. A total of 74.7 percent of electors took part in the parliamentary elections in Ukraine, which makes some 28 million people.

•Final results will be made public on March 29 at a news conference of the Central Electoral Commission.

Ukrainian, Tatar Parties in Crimea Urge Boycott

LD2603190894 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1540 GMT
26 Mar 94

[Text] Simferopol, 26 March—The Ukrainian Civil Congress of Crimea, the Crimea with Ukraine committee, the Party of Crimea's Economic Revival, and the Crimean-Tatar National Movement Organization published a joint statement in connection with the upcoming poll of Crimean citizens. The statement says, in particular: "... Paying no attention to the fact that the president of Ukraine has revoked Clauses 1 and 2 of Article 2 in Yuriy Meshkov's decree on conducting a poll of Republic of Crimea citizens on 27 March 1994, as counter to the Constitution and the laws of Ukraine, the poll is about to be held under the pressure of chauvinist forces. We consider a poll on the issues referring to the jurisdiction of Ukraine's Supreme Council as a step towards dangerous confrontation in the relations between Crimea and the central power bodies, as a call for continuing separatism. The poll will not be conducive to the ideas of interethnic concord, friendship and mutual trust, and to resolving the problems of the Crimean-Tatar people, but will become a serious weapon in the political struggle and will lead to even greater deterioration of the situation in Crimea. Moreover, any poll without the participation of native Crimeans, the Crimean Tatars, cannot be regarded as valid. The poll's

initiators aim to distract attention from the critical situation, from the economic and social problems... The fact of conducting a poll itself ... is pushing the people of Crimea towards a dangerous borderline.

"Therefore, we who stand firm on the foundations of unity between Crimea and Ukraine, appeal to Crimeans against taking part in the poll and urge local executive power bodies to strictly adhere to the Constitution and the laws of Ukraine."

Tatar Leader Says Crimean Tatars Against Poll

LD2603185894 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in
Ukrainian 0900 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Report on telephone interview with Refat Chubarov, deputy chairman of the Majlis of the Crimean Tatars, by Mykola Marynenko; Chubarov in Simferopol, date not given—recorded; Chubarov in Russian fading into Ukrainian translation]

[Text] [Chubarov] The thing is that our attitude toward all kinds of referendums in Crimea, by which influential forces are trying to determine its status, was and remains negative. We are against such actions because these are attempts to decide on Crimea's future without taking into account the will of the indigenous population of the peninsula, the Crimean Tatars. Therefore, any intentions by influential forces to do this by purely arithmetical voting will never satisfy the Tatars.

[Marynenko] During the telephone conversation with the deputy chairman of the Majlis I also recalled the following: When they asked Meshkov about his relations with the Crimean Tatars in general and the Majlis in particular, he answered that he had good contacts with the Crimean Tatars. Many of them supported him at the presidential election. As far as the Majlis is concerned, in Meshkov's opinion, there is some misunderstanding with its leaders only. I asked Mr. Chubarov to comment on these facts.

[Chubarov] This statement is on president Meshkov's conscience because it does not correspond to reality, at least judging by the results of the voting of the Crimean Tatars. In particular, during the first round we analyzed the voting at those polling stations where half or even more electors were Crimean Tatars. At these polling stations Bahrov, as a rule, was running first, other deputies lagging behind. So, I do not trust Yuriy Meshkov's statements of such kind.

As far as the Majlis of the Crimean Tatar people is concerned, president Meshkov has a good idea of the status of the Majlis. He has more than once declared that the Majlis of the Crimean Tatar people is a real force. The majority of the Crimean Tatars support the Majlis and one cannot ignore this fact.

[Marynenko] My last question to Refat Chubarov dealt with the March election in the autonomy both to the parliament of Ukraine and to the Supreme Council of

the autonomous Crimea Republic. I asked him what was the attitude of the Majlis toward these elections and the participation of the Crimean Tatars in them. Here is the reply by the deputy chairman of the Majlis, Mr. Chubarov.

[Chubarov] By the way, unlike... [pauses] This is probably the only advantage of the Crimean election law. The only difference between our law on the election to the Crimean parliament and the law of Ukraine on the election to the Supreme Council of Ukraine lies in the fact that here in Crimea a mixed election system was adopted. We have 66 one-seat constituencies. We have 14 deputy seats in a multi-seat party constituency and 14 deputy seats in a multi-seat Crimean-Tatar constituency.

The Crimean Tatars will take part in these elections. The Kurultay [congress] of the Crimean Tatar people approved a list of 25 candidates for deputies in a multi-seat Crimean-Tatar constituency. Altogether four such lists were approved. These are the lists of the Kurultay of the Crimean Tatar people, the Crimean-Tatar Culture Fund, the National Movement of the Crimean Tatars, and the lists of the Culture Center. It is noteworthy that the list of the Kurultay and the list of the Crimean-Tatar Culture Fund include like-minded people. The National Movement of the Crimean Tatars and the Crimean Tatar Culture Center also nominated like-minded people, but on the other side. That is to say, a polarization of forces is under way and the results of the election will, probably, round off all the talk on how many Crimean Tatars support the Majlis or, for example, the National Movement of the Crimean Tatars.

Meshkov Calls on Crimeans To Boycott Elections

LD2603190394 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 1540 GMT
26 Mar 94

[Text] Sevastopol, 26 March—As we reported earlier, President of Crimea Yuriy Meshkov appeared on Crimean television on 26 March with an address to the peninsula's population in which he in fact urged the Crimean electorate to boycott Ukraine's parliamentary election. Following the official part of the address, Mr. Meshkov added: "Using this opportunity I would like to express my view on the 27 March poll as that of a citizen. Who will I vote in the election to the Supreme Council of the Republic of Crimea? I will vote for candidates of the Rossiya bloc. How will I reply to the ballot questions in the poll of Republic of Crimea citizens on 27 March?"

To the first question, "Are you in favor of restoring the constitution of the Republic of Crimea of 26 May 1992 which determines relations between the Republic of Crimea and Ukraine on the basis of treaties and agreements?" I will say "yes". To the second question, "Are you in favor of restoring the Republic of Crimea constitution of 26 March 1992 which proclaims the right of the Republic of Crimea to dual citizenship?" I will say "yes". I will cross out the word "no." To the third question, "Are you in favor of granting decrees by the president of the Republic of Crimea the force of law on

issues of temporarily unregulated legislation?" I, as a citizen of the Republic of Crimea, will say "yes" and will cross out "no."

I will take away the ballot paper containing the names, first names and patronymics of candidates for the Supreme Council of Ukraine. I hope that 27 March will come up to the expectations we have for this day."

Meshkov Optimistic About Relations With Kiev

LD2703202594 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1920 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Video report by correspondent S. Milyanchikov, including recorded comment by Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov; from the "Vesti" newscast]

[Excerpts] Elections to a new parliament were held in Ukraine today.

[Milyanchikov] Unlike Russian elections to local councils, Crimean elections can be regarded as valid. [passage omitted]

Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov, who also took part in today's voting, believes that the results of Crimean elections and of the poll [on relations with Russia] will not spoil relations with Kiev.

[Meshkov] There are no grounds, no reasons for this. On the contrary, the situation is becoming more clear and calm. Mutual relations will be settled if we reach agreement and if the Kiev leadership shows understanding. In this case all problems will be solved.

[Milyanchikov] At 2000 Moscow time—and I will remind you that as of today Crimea lives according to Moscow time—the polling stations closed and the count of votes started. Two forecasts can be made, however, before all the votes are counted. The Russian idea, with which the Russia bloc and the Crimea Russian-speaking movement came to the elections, has won. And the second thing: In many constituencies, electors will have to cast their votes again since more than 1,100 candidates are vying for the 90 seats in the Crimean parliament.

Early Results Indicate Russia Bloc Win

LD2803081894 Kiev UNIAR in Ukrainian 0720 GMT
28 Mar 94

[Text] Simferopol, 27 Mar—According to Viktor Alsufyev, chairman of the electoral commission of the Republic of Crimea, elections to the Supreme Council of Crimea are valid in 17 out of 23 constituencies. Results in the other six constituencies are being verified.

It was reported at a news conference that 54.23 percent turned out at the polls in Simferopol, and 60.24 percent voted in Sevastopol. The highest turnout was registered in the ethnic constituencies. In the Armenian ethnic constituency, for example, 84 percent cast their votes,

and in the Crimean-Tatar constituency 78 percent. According to the preliminary results assessed by the Election-94 press center, most of the seats in the future Crimean parliament will be won by the Rossiya bloc.

Crimeans Vote To Support Meshkov in Plebiscite

LD2803083794 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0809 GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yefim Shvartsman]

[Text] Simferopol March 28 TASS—According to preliminary results, a majority of Crimeans who came to the polls on Sunday voted to support the policy of their president Yuriy Meshkov by saying "yes" at a plebiscite which he had initiated, TASS learned from reliable sources in the Crimean capital.

Official results are expected to be announced Wednesday.

The referendum included questions on whether the population favours relations with Ukraine on the basis of agreements, on dual citizenship on the peninsula and on providing the force of law to a number [of] Meshkov's decrees.

Local observers note that the affirmative answer to the questions means support to the first Crimean president elected in January and to his anti-crisis programme.

Meshkov Satisfied With Referendum Results in Crimea

LD2803120294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1046 GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] Crimean President Yuriy Meshkov, commenting in an interview with Interfax on the results of yesterday's referendum among those who live in the Crimea, has said that they confirm the correctness of the course chosen by the Crimean leadership. First we must act upon the results of the referendum, he said. I rely on myself, my administration, on the support of the Black Sea Fleet that the results of the poll will be put into force, he said in an interview with Interfax.

Conditions for Crimea's Economic Independence Set

LD2603164794 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1544 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Yefim Shvartsman]

[Text] Simferopol March 26 TASS—"Bearing in mind the special status, history and population of the Crimea, we will give it maximum possible economic independence on condition of a political status quo," Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk told the KRYMSKIE VEDOMOSTI newspaper today on the eve of the March 27 Crimean elections of Crimean and Ukrainian Parliament deputies.

The president stressed he does not want confrontation with the Crimean leadership, but there is a limit he will never overstep—the integrity of the state. Kravchuk said he understands the Crimea's inclination for Russia and Russian never-to-be-abandoned interests in the Crimea.

At the same time, President Kravchuk reminded of the Ukrainian strategy: "There will be no negotiations on borders, territorial integrity and sovereignty. The whole world is for us and the reaction of the United Nations Security Council to the Russian decision on Sevastopol is a vivid example of this support. The more so, we have signed a corresponding agreement with Boris Yeltsin.

"Europeans cannot understand what is happening; don't we understand we cannot break borders today, they are holy of holies and pillars of European security. That is why we say we cannot!"

Leonid Kravchuk thinks that an idea of possible co-existence of two currency zones in one state is "incompetent." He means the idea of the ruble zone declared by the Crimean president.

Kravchuk called for the creation of a well-considered program of the Crimean economic revival with due account of its peculiarities and said he and Yevgeniy Saburov are ready to achieve assistance of international fiscal organizations.

The Ukrainian president praised the Russian economist and politician nominated Crimean vice-premier by Yuriy Meshkov and said Ukrainian citizenship of Saburov is "not a problem."

Asked where Ukraine may unite with Russia in some form, Kravchuk said "I think that Ukraine must be together with Russia but not subordinated to Russia—that is all. I have a realistic view on facts, there is no other way for Ukraine but be together with Russia. We have been together for 300 years and it is in our genes. We have had quarrels, weddings and unifications amongst our peoples and these relations cannot be broken".

Kuchma Urges Kravchuk To Resign

MK2503131094 Moscow OSHCHAYA GAZETA in Russian No. 12/37, 25-31 Mar 94 (Signed to press 24 Mar) p 2

[Telephone interview with former Ukrainian Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma by Arkadiy Romm under the "Hello!" rubric: "Leonid Kuchma: The President Would Better Resign Voluntarily!"—date not given]

[Excerpt] After the elections for the Ukrainian Supreme Council, which are scheduled for 27 March, Ukraine is in for early presidential elections. Our correspondent, Arkadiy Romm, speaks with former Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma, who is considered the most realistic candidate for the presidency.

[Romm] Leonid Danilovich, do you really plan to replace Kravchuk?

[Kuchma] I have not decided yet; first of all I need to see what kind of new Supreme Council we will have. If it is similar to what we have now, it will be a useless waste of time. I cannot find a single good word for what is presently going on in the country. The economy has suffered a catastrophe. Enterprises have effectively ground to a standstill. The credit and economic system has completely collapsed. The country is ungovernable: there is no state as such. If we are to come out of the crisis, tight measures are inevitable. The president must enjoy the overwhelming support of the population.

[Romm] What is your assessment of the president's decision not to contest the early elections?

[Kuchma] The best thing for Leonid Makarovich is to resign voluntarily. But will he go? The Kiev authorities do not want the presidential elections to take place along with elections for the Supreme Council.

[Romm] "Independence" has become as popular a buzzword in Ukraine as it is painful. What does it mean for you, Leonid Danilovich?

[Kuchma] As early as last spring I said that we would not be able to withstand world prices for energy resources. I proposed a number of options. One of them involved the Black Sea Fleet. I am certain that if we had been given it lock, stock, and barrel, we would have returned it ourselves in a week, because we would have been unable to support it. Now developments in Crimea are unfolding in such a way that we may be left without it altogether. We should have leased the naval armada to Russia together with the bases. What we need is a border fleet—Ukraine does not have geopolitical interests in the world ocean.

[Romm] What do you, as former chief of a missile-making powerhouse, think about a nuclear-free Ukraine?

[Kuchma] Stepping the missiles down from alert status is a technically difficult and very costly process. According to U.S. experts' estimates, this would cost Ukraine \$3 billion. But I do not want specialists to come here to transport the nuclear warheads to Russia, and that is all. This is why I opposed the reduction of nuclear arms and the accession to the Nonproliferation Treaty at the closed Supreme Council meeting last May. Believe me, in general very few people in the world knew about a state called Ukraine. The United States' joining our disarmament effort has been caused by the fact that the parliament made the right decision. There had already been a precedent: When we had tactical weapons withdrawn voluntarily, we did not receive any political or economic dividends, although we had been promised: Just do it and we will start helping you.

All our 130 liquid-propellant missiles have had their guarantee terms expire. As for liquid fuel, God forbid, I would tell you! For instance, we do not have technologies

to process and to dispose of gertin, a kind of such fuel. Or try to neutralize a solid fuel missile. There is no such technology in the world yet. The entire range of disarmament problems should be resolved comprehensively.

As for the signing of the trilateral treaty between Ukraine, Russia, and the United States, I have supported it. I think that in the long run Ukraine should be nuclear-free. [passage omitted]

Kravchuk Said To Consider Presidential Rule

MK2603114094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 26 Mar 94 p 1

[Report by Konstantin Parishkura from Kiev under the "Ukraine" rubric: "Elections Unlikely To Clarify Alignment of Political Forces. Democratic Party, Rukh, Communists, and Socialists are Front-Runners in Election Campaign"]

[Excerpts] Public opinion polls conducted on the eve of elections for the Ukrainian Supreme Council have shown that question No. 1 for many voters is as follows: "Will a new parliament be elected?" This cannot be answered yet. There are a number of options. According to the pollsters, from 70 to 87 percent of the voters plan to turn out for the election. But while the elections are held according to the majority principle, the voters' preferences vary too much. This is why none of the candidates appears to be able to win the requisite 50 percent of the vote: there are too many contenders for one seat, the average number throughout the country being 13-15 candidates. The second round to be held upon the emergence of two front-runners in each district may not take place at all because of low turnout: those who voted for a democrat will never turn out to elect a communist or a nationalist, and the other way around. [passage omitted]

There is still only one realistic candidate to the post of head of state—former Prime Minister Leonid Kuchma, who draws on support from the director corps and the Interregional Reform Bloc [IRB], an organization that is being set up to back his bid. This association, also known as the "Kuchma-Grinev" bloc, plans to form its faction at the Supreme Council and to set up a political party. The IRB, which was created one month ago, does not have a clear program and comprises people of all stripes—cautious Rukh members; former nomenklatura, albeit not the most notorious ones; and people of artistic professions who are well known by themselves.

What will happen if the parliamentary elections do not take place? Currently rumors are circulating that Leonid Kravchuk is going to impose direct presidential rule as the sole head of state elected by the entire people. In this case he would need a structure to rely upon, and observers think that the "Kuchma-Grinev" bloc may well prove to be such a support. At any rate, Mr. Grinev himself has not ruled out the possibility of cooperating with Kravchuk on certain terms. [passage omitted]

Chernovil Opposes More Authority for Kravchuk

LD2603191494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650
GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Vyacheslav Chernovil, leader of Ukraine's Popular Rukh, declared that he opposes granting any additional authorities to the Ukrainian president irrespective of the results of the elections.

The press service of the Popular Rukh movement reported to Interfax-Ukraine agency that Chernovil declared that "Ukrainian president had already enough authorities in 1992 but he has not issued any decree which would stimulate reforms." At the same time he underlined that "Kravchuk has appointed a great number of former communist party functionaries as his envoys in the regions, handed over tactical nuclear weapons to Russia, and made one concession after another regarding Crimea and the Black Sea Fleet."

Chernovil is convinced that in case additional authorities are granted to the Ukrainian president "a quiet dictatorship of oligarchy will be established in Ukraine."

On Friday evening Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk voiced a statement in which he expressed his intention to address Ukraine's Supreme Soviet with a request to grant him additional legislative authorities in case not more than two thirds of deputies are elected to the parliament. As many as 450 deputies must be elected during the elections to Ukraine's Supreme Soviet scheduled for March 27.

Equality in Russia-Ukraine-Crimea Triangle Sought

LD2703184194 Moscow NTV in Russian 1700 GMT 27
Mar 94

[Excerpts] [Passage omitted] [Unidentified correspondent] Here is how President Yuriy Meshkov sees relations with Ukraine and Russia. In an exclusive interview with NTV today he said:

[Begin Meshkov recording, shown seated at desk in front of unrecognized flag] For the time being what we are proposing is a kind of legislative initiative. We are appealing to Russia and Ukraine to reach agreement on a problem which is common to all. The initiative has been accepted by the Russian side and is being worked on actively, but unfortunately there has so far been no reaction from the leadership in Kiev. How does Crimea see herself in this triangle? Of course we would like to have an equilateral triangle, although of course the scale is incompatible. [end recording] [passage omitted]

Order To Send Conscripts Only to Crimea Disavowed

LD2603125794 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in
Ukrainian 0900 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] The Ukrainian Defense Ministry press service has declared that the Crimea president's order to dispatch

Crimean conscripts only to the military units stationed on the territory of the peninsula, where they are to do their military service, does not comply with the Ukrainian legislation currently in force and therefore has no legal force.

Kravchuk Interviewed on Election Issues

LD2603001294 Kiev Radio Ukraine World Service in
Ukrainian 2010 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Interview with President Leonid Kravchuk by Ukraine's State Television and Radio Company correspondents on 25 March on the 27 March elections to the Supreme Council; place not given—recorded; from poor reception]

[Text] [Announcer] President of Ukraine Leonid Kravchuk was interviewed on 25 March by Ukraine's State Television and Radio Company correspondents. The subject of the interview was a package of issues concerning the forthcoming election to the Supreme Council of Ukraine. We are offering a recording of the conversation with the Ukrainian head of state made by our correspondent Vitaliy Naumenko.

[Question indistinct]

[Kravchuk] I have a sickness called radiculitis, whereby I am well, but not too well. That is why I am working at home today. By the way I have everything I need to work here, the relevant contacts and communications. At work, it is a bit difficult, when I look like I swallowed a pole, and I have to meet people, so in order not to inconvenience them and myself, I am working at home.

[Correspondent] [words indistinct] What can you, as a popularly elected president, wish the electorate?

[Kravchuk] Like the rest of the electorate, I too will take part in the voting, and incidentally, I listen to candidates' campaign speeches and I understand how difficult it will be for the voters to make up their minds. Because the programs and speeches are sometimes diametrically opposed, while the candidates are too many to make one's choice. But still, [words indistinct] because they will need judgement, courage and foresight in order to make the right choice, otherwise we will wind up in a tight corner. That is why I urge voters to come to the polls on the 27th and make their choice. That is, elect worthy and intelligent people to the parliament, who will start a new stage in the political reform of our society, start a new stage in the development of our entire society.

[Correspondent] How would you predict the political and economic situation in the near future, if the Supreme Council is not elected at the first attempt? [words indistinct]

[Kravchuk] This is a very serious question you are asking. But I am prepared for it, and I drew for myself a picture of possible options. First of all, I would like to say

that, regardless of what happens and how, we must consolidate the political and non-political conditions necessary to reform our society. This must happen irrespective of the election results. And it is preconditioned by the fact that we, first of all, have no alternative, and second of all, that we have created very favorable foreign policy conditions for this course of development, and we have to do it. Not to take advantage of it now would spell further deterioration of the economic situation and especially, a serious decline of our state's authority. Therefore, we have to do it, and we probably have no other way. But there are (different) possible options. The first option, for example: a new Supreme Council is not elected. That is, there is not a sufficient number of deputies to make constitutional decisions. In that case, whether you like it or not, we must work together with the old Supreme Council. How?

[Correspondent interrupts, words indistinct]

[Kravchuk] Yes, and secondly, we already have the experience of this kind of cooperation. At different times it was inadequate, but on the whole it is extremely complicated, and it was these complications that led to the deterioration of the situation where it did not have to deteriorate. How could we work with the old Supreme Council, and what is the picture I have drawn for myself?

The president asks the Supreme Council to postpone, defer the election scheduled for June. There is every reason to do that, as failure to elect a new Supreme Council already means that there are problems that cannot be solved (?at once). This is the first move. Second, the Supreme Council of the old convocation, understanding the situation which has emerged and which is actually very serious, assumes a number of powers. These are: adopting the constitution and putting it to a nation-wide referendum, and adopting permanent procedural rules. The rest of the powers concerning the regulation of economic relations and legal regulation of the fight against organized crime and corruption are handed over by the Supreme Council to the president. Thus, both the president and the Supreme Council work. Afterwards, the finalized draft of the constitution is put to an all-Ukrainian referendum, which is mandatory, because you cannot entrust this Supreme Council, after the election, with adopting a constitution. You understand what consequences this would have. The referendum adopts a new constitution, then respectively, laws are passed on elections to local power bodies and their structure, and on presidential elections. After the constitution is adopted, a new Supreme Council is elected, by all means. Until the election of a new Supreme Council, the old one is working, and everything is placed on a constitutional basis. After this, a new Supreme Council is elected and gets down to work. The constitution is there, the power structure is there, and all these power structures are elected in a constitutional way, a president is elected, and there is no political crisis and no chaos in the society. This is the option of cooperation with the Supreme Council.

But suppose the old Supreme Council does not agree. This can happen, we know the difficulties the parliamentarians are having, and the problems in the society: the lack of structure in the society and in the Supreme Council itself. That is a compromise solution, it is a normal solution, and if it is rejected, the president is faced with complications. He cannot watch society fall apart, chaos take over the political structures, another struggle unleashed, which will result in further deterioration of the political and economic situation, and an end to reforms. The president must find a way and act accordingly.

What way can it be? The president appeals to the newly elected deputies. Suppose, there are 300 of them elected.

[Correspondent] That is a quorum.

[Kravchuk] It is, but it is not a full Supreme Council, because there should be 450. That is, 150 deputies are missing, and it is not a full parliament. There is a quorum for decision-making, but there is no Supreme Council in the full sense of the term. And that is a very important element, I do not want people to think that if there are 300, it is a full Supreme Council.

Together with the Supreme Council, which is not a full one yet, he [the president] agrees the following actions: First, a decision has to be made again on cancelling the local elections in June 1994 and the presidential election, so as to prevent a power vacuum, because these bodies would have no constitutional status. Second, the president nominates a council, elected by the leaders of this elected part of the new Supreme Council to grant the president extra powers of legislative regulation. This, one can say, would be a Supreme Council. But, as I said, not in its full composition. [words indistinct]

Due to the lack of definition as to the duties of the Supreme Council and the level of its relations with the president and the government, a number of problems emerge. Again, the number one problem is adoption of a new constitution. But, as I said before, there is no full Supreme Council. Therefore, we could form a new, extended, constitutional commission, including regional representatives, experts in constitutional law and [word indistinct] and finalize the constitution, but not adopt it, because the Supreme Council is not full, and the draft must be put to a nation-wide referendum. For this, we need to work out a draft law on an all-Ukrainian referendum on the constitution, explaining how it should be adopted, and set a date for an all-Ukrainian referendum. Next, after the constitution is adopted in an all-Ukrainian referendum, the door is open for elections to all power bodies, since the constitution lays down the political system which is the subject of a lot of talk today and solves other problems which need to be laid down in the constitution. Then local power bodies are elected, presidential elections are scheduled, and again, all this is solved in a constitutional way, without any tug-of-war. Such are the options.

But if a full Supreme Council is elected, then this full Supreme Council will act in accordance with [word indistinct], common sense and [words indistinct].

[Question indistinct]

[Kravchuk] The thing is that, according to my proposals, the presidential and local elections should be taken off the agenda and deferred, until after the constitution is adopted together with the relevant laws on the power structure, etc. And in those elections which will take place, it is clear that one will have to make up one's mind and make a choice. If now, contrary to sensible proposals... [pauses] and I do not see any problems about them, you just need to think, take your head in your hands and see that the period is a difficult one, a period of transition, and nothing here (?happens the way one would like to), but we are taking a constitutional path, that of adopting a constitution and passing the laws, and only then start acting on the basis of the constitution and the laws. Thus, legitimacy is ensured. As for ambitions, they have nothing to do with legitimacy. Everybody must understand this. Nobody wants to grab the most. There is a situation, there are problems, and there is Ukraine. And we must think in terms of the Ukrainian state, of preserving it, of preventing a political chaos, taking the economic situation into our hands, that is, preserve the state and contain the situation. For this, we need to act accordingly.

[Question indistinct]

[Kravchuk] Well, you see, whatever the high policy is, however high-ranking one's position may be, it...

[Correspondent interrupts, question indistinct]

[Kravchuk] Well, I cannot talk about it now, I know one thing: as long as there is no law on the power structure, and as long as there is no law stipulating what kind of president with what kind of powers should be elected, it is illogical. You cannot put elections first and everything else second. This leads to confrontation. That is why people see, first of all, that this is missing. They, and I have met many, and many write to me, are simply afraid that this may lead to political chaos, electing just any kind of administration over the economy and the political structures, and we know what it can lead to. Some may, riding on this wave, take a very irresponsible political stand and provoke anything. And people are afraid, knowing what it can lead to. That is why they are saying this. They feel the situation there better than we do here in Kiev. And secondly, they also write that the timing is bad, it is a time of spring field work, and in some regions it is already harvest time. And [words indistinct] they are working, while in the meantime, such a political action as a presidential election and election to all power bodies will again [word indistinct] all regions, from the village council to the rayon center.

[Correspondent] Speaking of regions, Leonid Makarovych, and elections in Crimea. Could you comment on the latest decisions of President Meshkov as to how they will affect the election to the new parliament.

[Kravchuk] I spoke about it several times, but will mention one more aspect in connection with the election. What would I like the Crimeans to understand? And not only the Crimeans. No matter how good and promising the president's or anyone else's actions may seem today, now matter how well they seem to accord with the present situation, you still need to think about tomorrow, about the future. And tomorrow, the future, is this: Crimea is a constituent part of Ukraine, and Crimea will live together with Ukraine. Perhaps someone may not welcome this today, perhaps someone may have other plans. I am talking about political forces, not the ordinary worker who is now thinking only of peace and well-being, he does not have any other aspirations. Another thing is when political storms are having their effect. So if you think about tomorrow and the fact that Crimea is part of Ukraine, you need to elect deputies to the Ukrainian parliament, in order for them to defend Crimea's interests. Incidentally, when this parliament was passing the law on the division of powers and other documents concerning Crimea directly or Ukraine in general, determining Crimea's role, they were very active. It is true, and it is understandable. Failure to elect deputies to the Ukrainian parliament would be a great loss for Crimea. I do not know what levers they could use then to affect the passage through the Supreme Council of these or those documents directly concerning Crimea. This is just one aspect.

I want to tell all our Ukrainian citizens at this complex moment for Ukraine, at this time of difficulty, aggravated by the election campaign and deputies' speeches, the campaign is about to stop, and you have 24 hours to calm down, to grasp the situation, sit down at the table come up to your children and grandchildren, look into their eyes, and ask yourself one question: Are they to live tomorrow in peace and harmony, or in some other situation? And what do you need for that? Take these thoughts to the polls and vote for the people who will ensure peace, harmony and the development of an independent Ukrainian state.

Kravchuk Adviser Hints at Anti-Crimean 'Measures'

LD2603175694 Moscow Russian Television Network in Russian 1700 GMT 26 Mar 94

[From the "Vesti" newscast]

[Text] The outcome of the presidential elections in the Crimea and the subsequent course of events are acquiring particular importance on the very eve of the Ukrainian parliamentary elections. Confrontation with Kiev, be it explicit or implicit, and gravitation towards Russia are now typical not only of the Crimea but of other fairly large parts of the Ukraine as well.

Representatives of totalitarian trends are bound to appear in the new parliament, as are their opponents. This is unlikely to help reduce tension in the top echelons of power or increase the capability of the supreme bodies of state authority.

Meanwhile, presidential representatives have been outspokenly critical of incitement towards separatism, of which they accuse the leaders of the Crimea. For example, the head of the Ukrainian president's internal policy service, Mykola Mykhalchenko, told journalists recently that Kiev is likely to have to apply the same measures towards the Crimea as India in the Punjab or Great Britain in Northern Ireland.

Donetsk Poll To Go Ahead Despite Ruling

MK2503133094 Moscow SEGODNYA in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 1

[Report by Konstantin Parishkura: "Donetsk To Conduct Regional Poll"]

[Text] A session of the Donetsk Oblast Soviet has rejected the protest of Ukraine's general prosecutor regarding the cancellation of the poll, scheduled simultaneously with the elections for the Ukrainian Supreme Soviet, on state language status for Russian, and a federal system for Ukraine and its joining the CIS. The poll will be held all the same.

'Rodina' Group Founded in Crimea For 'Unification'

PM2503154294 Moscow ROSSIYSKIYE VESTI in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 1

[Unattributed, untitled report under "News in Brief" rubric]

[Text] The "Motherland" [Rodina] sociopolitical association has been established in the Crimea. The new organization's founders have declared that their aim is to assist the unification of the Crimea, Ukraine, and Russia, as well as other CIS states, in a single state.

Ukraine To Have Single Time Zone

LD2503235394 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1557 GMT 25 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Galina Nekrasova]

[Text] Lvov, 25 Mar—The Cabinet of Ministers of Ukraine has decided to keep the Ukrainian time one and indivisible. The hands of the clocks will be moved one hour forward on 27 March in the far east and the far west of the Ukraine. Earlier, the state commission for single time and standard frequency came to the conclusion that it is inexpedient and disadvantageous for the state to introduce two or three time zones in the country.

At the same time, Kiev has proposed to regions to introduce their own timetable for the beginning of work for enterprises: from 0700 hours in the morning for five eastern regions, from 0730 hours for 11 central regions, and from 0800 hours for five western regions. This will allow people to use the light day maximum efficiently.

Belarus

Supreme Soviet Chairman Signs New Constitution

WS2803104094 Minsk Radio Minsk Network in
Belarusian 1000 GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] Supreme Soviet Chairman Mechyslaw Hryb has signed today the Constitution of the sovereign and independent Republic of Belarus. We would like to note that the parliament finally adopted our basic law on 15 March. This was a historical day for the Republic and was pronounced a holiday.

Following the signing ceremony, the Supreme Soviet chairman held a news conference. Mechyslaw Ivanavich Hryb responded to journalists' questions and briefed them on his visit to Paris where he participated in a debate of the Interparliamentary Assembly.

Kebich Views Economic Relations With Russia

LD2603180994 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in
Russian 1639 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Interview With Belarusian Prime Minister Vyachaslaw Kebich by Mayak correspondent Yuliy Semenov on 23 March—place not given; From the "Panorama" program]

[Text] [Semenov] Vyachaslaw Frantsavich, to what extent do you see a settlement of financial and economic relations with Russia as a way out of Belarus's economic crisis?

[Kebich] I think that not only Belarus, but also Russia and the other CIS countries should, within the framework of an economic union above all, allow the free movement of goods. There are enough borders, enough customs services, and enough queues on the borders. Nevertheless, all those engaged in smuggling are in one way or another getting their goods through. We think, therefore, that the treaty that is due to be signed between Russia and the Republic of Belarus will to all extents and purposes be a treaty within the framework of an CIS economic union. Here we are in no way against such an economic union.

[Semenov] Nevertheless, as far as I am aware, the talks are proceeding fairly slowly, although they are under way. What is your assessment of their progress at this moment of time?

[Kebich] Although an optimist, I have been becoming of late a somewhat superstitious person. Therefore, I should like to touch wood and say that this union will nevertheless come about. There are more people who see a benefit in this union than people opposing it. This does not demand a lot of thought. In this matter common sense shows, to take the example of Europe, that the way to rescue one's economy or improve one's economic state lies first and foremost in integration. We have already, so to speak, been through a phase of disintegration, when we have been breaking off all kinds of

economic links. Just see now how in one way or another all politicians are beginning to be more sober in their judgements on this issue. Ukraine too is displaying a serious approach to this union.

[Semenov] There is talk that it is a matter of reviving the USSR in a new garb.

[Kebich] Not at all. It would be impossible now to revive it, even, forgive me, by employing forcible methods. It would be simply impossible for us to go back to the former set-up. I regard such ideas as simply ridiculous.

[Semenov] You are indeed an ardent propagandist of the idea that the problem of energy resources be tackled on equal terms for Russian and Belarusian customers, if such a union is agreed upon. Is that not so?

[Kebich] Yes, it is, but in general I do not see the issue as, say, Russian fuel and energy prices being low and fuel and energy prices for Belarus high. I am in favor of closer prices.

[Semenov] In favor of them drawing closer to world prices?

[Kebich] Certainly. I think that this will most likely occur within the next 18 months, no later.

[Semenov] And now a final question: It is now clear that the day and hour when Belarus will get its first president is not far off, and you are being named as one of the politicians who are morally entitled to stand for the presidency. Could you, to some extent, now define your position in this regard? If you intend to stand, under what banner and relying on whom will you set about the elections?

[Kebich] A law on presidential elections has not yet been adopted. I am not entitled at the present time to say that I would be a presidential candidate, until a law on presidential elections is in existence. However, if I had occasion to stand as a presidential candidate, I would nevertheless give top priority to economic links with the CIS countries and with the great Russian people, who are close to us spiritually, while, of course, still observing the statehood of the Republic of Belarus.

Official Reveals Kebich Will Run for Presidency

WS2803093494 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 1600
GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] [Prime Minister] Vyacheslav Kebich will run for the presidential office, stated First Deputy Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikovich at a meeting with managers and specialists of industrial enterprises, banks, and other sectors of the economy. He expressed hope that they will support this candidacy.

Timetable for Russian Missile Forces Withdrawal Reported*WS2803093994 Minsk BELAPAN in Belarusian 1600 GMT 27 Mar 94*

[Text] The withdrawal of Russia's strategic missile forces deployed in Belarus has already begun. This relates to the Mazyr and Lida missile divisions composed of eight missile regiments equipped with 72 launching facilities. The divisions are armed with the portable ground-based missile systems RS-12M and Topal.

In 1993, one missile regiment was withdrawn from Pastawy, Vitsebsk Oblast, to Russia. In 1994, another four regiments with 36 launching facilities will be withdrawn from Belarus. The last regiments will be pulled out in 1995. In 1996, the Mazyr and Lida divisions will cease to exist.

Moldova**Snegur Prepared To Counter Integrationist Electoral Success***LD2503171794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1448 GMT 25 Mar 94*

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 36: Compiled by Sergey Logachev, Andrey Petrovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] President Mircea Snegur "has a contingency plan" if the parties advocating integration into Romania score a success in the February 27 elections. A source in the president's entourage says that the president keeps his plans to himself because he thinks that the probability of an electoral success for those parties is merely theoretical.

The source told INTERFAX that parties that had recently advocated integration into Romania tried to win electoral support in the runup to the election by saying they wanted Moldova to stay independent.

The source also said that the president intended to hold a poll on 6 March so as to determine what the country's residents were thinking of its independence.

The president is sure that the 27 February elections and the poll will confirm that his independence course is supported by the population. Even though the poll results would not be legally binding, Snegur did not doubt that they would endorse "a policy of true independence" to be pursued by the president and the new parliament. The president hopes that the elections will return a solid majority of centrist-minded deputies who will work with him in a coordinated and constructive way.

Indeed, sociological polls taken in Moldova recently forecast that over 30 percent of seats in parliament will be won by the Agrarian Democratic Party (ADP) which will be followed by socialists and social-democrats. The

ADP leaders Petru Lucinskiy, Andrey Sangheli and Dumitru Motpan will offer the two other parties an alliance in parliament.

According to the source, Snegur is in a good position to discuss the status of Transdniestria with the leaders of that area. Snegur has recently received a letter from Russian President Boris Yeltsin, saying that Russia is prepared to continue to act as a mediator in negotiating a settlement. The Moldovan authorities are prepared to discuss with Transdniestria a number of compromise options leading to solution of problems on which the two sides differ.

"Transdniestria could enjoy maximal self-government, going as far as legislative autonomy, while staying in the Republic of Moldova as its integral part," Snegur believes.

Meanwhile, scores of people from the left bank of the Dniester (the self-proclaimed Transdniestrian Moldovan Republic—IF) have arrived in electoral stations set up for them. (The Central Election Commission had decided that residents of Transdniestria could vote from 21 February to 27 February—IF).

Victor Puscasu, Deputy Chairman of the Moldovan parliament told INTERFAX that an exception was made for the residents of Transdniestria so that they "express their views independently of the Tiraspol leaders." He said that they would be allowed to vote even if they did not have a mark in their passport saying that they were Moldovan citizens.

Officials of the Central Election Commission say that hundreds of Transdniestrians have voted on 21 February. The elections are reported to run into difficulties, however. Voting ballots were still unavailable in some voting stations and Transdniestrian guardsmen who patrol bridges over the Dniester harass the voters.

Activists of some parties are said to tell the voters approaching the voting stations who to vote for. They abuse their right to continue campaigning.

Snegur's headquarters are engulfed by telegrams from the south of Moldova. A source in the president's entourage told Interfax they protest the ban on opening electoral stations in areas where Gagauzi reside, effectively barring over 100,000 people from voting.

Snegur has reportedly decreed that voting stations be opened there.

'Conflicting Assessments' of Election Results Eyed*PM2503155794 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 94 First Edition p 6*

[Report by Lyudmila Feliksova: "Moldova: Postelection Gossip"]

[Text] Kishinev [Chisinau] —The final results of the elections in Moldova have still not been finalized, but

the time for conflicting assessments has come. In an interview for a WASHINGTON POST correspondent, Moldovan President Mircea Snegur expressed satisfaction with the elections. In his opinion, they were democratic in character. He cited foreign observers in this assessment. Snegur called the Agrarian Democratic Party, which polled the majority of the votes, a centrist party. Its opponents, he believes, have no evidence to suggest that the agrarians' success will lead to a change of political course.

As for the bloc formed by the Socialist Path and the "Unity" movement, which came second to the Agrarians, Snegur noted that such is the reality and that deputies of this political orientation can conduct reforms.

The president hopes that the emergence of a parliamentary majority will make it possible to resolve the problems of Moldova's eastern regions. The CSCE mission under Russian mediation will help to achieve that goal, he believes. However, Snegur explained that he has in mind a democratic Russia headed by President Yeltsin. If the nationalists try to encroach on Moldova's independence and sovereignty, he noted, the country will not be alone because it is a member of many international organizations, which will come to its aid. The president of Moldova firmly advocated the withdrawal of Russia's 14th Army.

In these first few days after the elections, Snegur has stated that within a month Moldova will join NATO's "Partnership for Peace" program, which in his opinion, offers real solutions to avert the conflicts that threaten Europe.

The losers in the elections are less optimistic in their assessment. For example, A. Arseni, chairman of the Democratic Labor Party, believes that the influence of state organs was evident during the elections and their results showed that the voters depend to a large extent on the leadership in the local organs. Furthermore, he believes, the population was disoriented by the idea of reunification with Romania.

V. Puskasu, leader of the Republican Party and vice chairman of the former parliament, said that he does not regard the elections as a tragedy. In his opinion, it is bewildering that the majority of electors voted for the Agrarian Democratic Party while only 1 percent voted

for the Republican Party, even though the two parties' have similar aims and programs.

Puskasu believes it quite possible that the new parliament, like its predecessor, will be forced to resign before its term has expired. In view of this, the Republican Party intends to work for the future in the belief that the new election cycle has already begun.

But V. Cheshuyev, representative of the defeated Social Democratic Party and director of the privatization department, who, during the election campaign, entered into a polemic with Premier A. Sangheli, his immediate superior, has resigned because he considers that he cannot remain in his post any longer.

The final results are still not available, but there has been another statement from the Central Electoral Commission, which is protesting against the mass media, which are using the preliminary figures without citing specific sources. The Central Electoral Commission is critical of the Mayak Radio station and Ostankino TV company in particular, but a date for publishing the final results has still not been announced.

MPPM Views Election, Poll Results as 'Triumph of Reason'

AU2703191194 Chisinau BASAPRESS in English 1847 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Chisinau, BASAPRESS 26/3/1994—The Patriotic Movement "Pro Moldova" (MPPM) welcomes the electoral victory of the Democratic Agrarian Party and of the Block of the Socialist Party and Unitatea-Edinstvo Movement, as well as the results of the sociologic poll, which demonstrate the "triumph of reason," says the declaration of the Movement published today in KISHINEVSKYE NOVOSTI (News of Chisinau). At the same time, the MPPM is concerned that "although the frontist-unionist ideology and political formations have suffered a total failure, their adepts, hidden in ministries and academies, in structures of the National Radio and Television, public education and culture, in rightist newspapers, in the leadership of the Writers' Union, continue to mislead the people." They corrupt the faith of the young generation in the specificity of the Moldovan people and its culture, they impose by all means the concept of Romanism of the Moldovans, the declaration asserts. Its authors claim that supporters of unionism want to transform Bessarabia, according to the model of 1918, into a province of Grand Romania. [passage indistinct]

Kazakhstan

Nazarbayev: 'Nobody Knows What Russia Wants'

PM2503144494 Madrid ABC in Spanish 23 Mar 94 p 28

[Interview with Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev by Enrique Serbeto in Almaty; date not given]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The 8 March parliamentary elections were regarded by international observers as out of keeping with the high level of democratic guarantees. This is the first blot on the record of this leader with the reputation of being moderate and sensible, who defends himself by saying that "when you speak of democracy in central Asia, in Kazakhstan, it cannot be compared with France, Spain, or other countries. If we are speaking of European standards, it must also be said how many years it took to achieve them. It must be borne in mind that women in the United States did not have the right to vote until the beginning of this century. But these states have 200 years of history, and France, Spain, and Britain have thousands. We have only been independent for two years. We are heading for democracy and the market economy step by step. If we try to turn the democratic cart too quickly, we will be in danger of overturning it."

[Serbeto] The economic reform and privatization are proving very difficult in Russia. Has Kazakhstan used the lessons of this Russian experience in order to design its own model?

[Nazarbayev] After many centuries of totalitarian rule, people are accustomed to collective methods of leadership and production, and so, from the psychological viewpoint, it is very difficult suddenly to accept private ownership. But, despite everything, we are prepared to hand over part of Kazakhstan's resources to the country's population. We are conducting not a chaotic privatization but one under the regulating control of the government, which is accelerating the privatization process, since it is very difficult from the grassroots. In agriculture, we are not yet considering the total privatization of land, although this is our medium-term aim.

[Serbeto] Are you in favor of the so-called "shock therapy," or of delaying radical decisions to the utmost in order to preserve social peace?

[Nazarbayev] We started with "shock therapy" when we decided to liberalize all prices, but we must be very vigilant because the process could go wrong at any time. The monetarist prescriptions against inflation are not sufficient in themselves. In the West, they must realize that they reached this situation after many years of evolution. For instance, in Spain Franco left everything ready, but we had no Franco.

[Serbeto] What is Kazakhstan's nuclear policy?

[Nazarbayev] Kazakhstan is fulfilling its pledges for the elimination of nuclear weapons. We were the first CIS state to ratify START I and the Lisbon protocol. The

only delays were due to the fact that we were trying to secure guarantees that this is our lawful property and that we will be compensated for the cost of the enriched uranium in our nuclear warheads.

[Serbeto] The presence in this country of a large population group of Russian origin is viewed as a factor of instability. To what extent do you believe that this is a grave danger to coexistence?

[Nazarbayev] It would be incorrect to say that this problem does not exist. Some Russian politicians wish to use this for their own ends, but we will not accept this in Kazakhstan, because the Russians of Kazakhstan are our citizens. It cannot be said that human rights are violated here, but if anybody believes this, we invite all UN delegations to check this. In my opinion, people's main concerns are a result of the disintegration of the USSR. The fall of a great empire is always painful, and so it has always been throughout history. I know that Yeltsin and Kozyrev are very experienced people, but these politicians should have thought about the Russians left outside Russia when they signed the Slav treaty which dissolved the USSR.

[Serbeto] Why do you not accept the proposal for granting the Russians dual nationality?

[Nazarbayev] Just imagine if the Russians, who are 32 percent of the population, had two passports in their pockets. They would have one foot in Russia and the other here. That would destabilize the situation in Kazakhstan. Why do they say nothing in Russia about the violation of the rights of the non-Russians living in Russia? A million Kazakhs live in Russia. Have they opened any Kazakh school in Russia? In Kazakhstan, 65 percent of schools operate in Russian, and last year 78 percent of the students starting high school did so in Russian. Some 75 percent of the news media are in Russian. All the state bodies use Russian, and I myself am speaking to you in Russian. Can any other CIS state say that it respects linguistic minorities as we do? We will resolve all the problems of the Russian-speaking Kazakhs, because this is an internal problem of ours—not that of any other country. Nobody can concern themselves about the Russians better than us, and we want no assistance from Russia.

[Serbeto] Russia is trying to attract other CIS states into its military and economic sphere of influence. Have you noted this trend with respect to Kazakhstan?

[Nazarbayev] Nobody knows what Russia wants. They lack a policy in this respect. It would be better to ask the Russians what they want. We are a sovereign country and are not dependent on Russia for either oil, coal, or food. Since we introduced our currency, we have been living completely independently, and Russia has understood this. We have oil, gas, wolfram, gold, diamonds, and uranium. Russia's relations with Ukraine and Belarus cannot be compared with those it maintains with Kazakhstan.

Nazarbayev Decree on Taxation of Security Transactions

LD2603165294 Almaty KAZTAG in Russian 1400
GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Decree of the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan on taxation of all the operations with securities. In accordance with the law of the Republic of Kazakhstan of 10 December 1993, on temporary delegation of additional powers to the president of the Republic of Kazakhstan and heads of local administration and due to the introduction of the national currency, I decree:

1. To establish that operations on selling-purchasing and floating securities among the founders, certificates of shares, bonds, and notes—regardless of their type—conditions of their circulation and face value, except for shares of working collectives, bonds of the state domestic loans of 1982, the USSR state treasury bonds, certificates of the USSR saving's bank and the securities which are issued by the government of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

Tax, on the operations with securities, is levied on emitter when registering issue of securities—0.5 percent of the face value of the emission:

- When concluding an agreement on selling-purchasing the state securities—one tyin from every 10 tenge,
- When concluding an agreement on selling-purchasing securities—three tyins from every 10 tenge,
- When concluding a deal on purchasing-selling securities and after registering them, tax is charged only from the buyers of securities in the form of payment for each deal.

Tax on operations with securities is not levied on intermediary organizations involved in trading securities at the expense and on instruction from client:

- When concluding deals at the exchange and nonexchange markets through the intermediary organizations those, who purchase securities, pay tax to the clearing departments of the stock exchanges, stock departments of the consumer and other kinds of exchanges, mediatory companies along with issuance of documents on selling and purchasing securities.
- When registering deals on purchasing and selling securities between sellers and purchases, tax is paid by the latter to the accounts of sellers, who are held responsible for the prompt and full payment of tax to the budget.
- On a quarterly basis, tax payers are to submit to tax bodies financial statements of the calculated sums of profit taxes and this got to be done within the time allocated for [compiling] the quarterly balance of sheets.

2. The above decree has the power of the law and is valid until the newly elected Supreme Soviet of the Republic issues a relevant law.

The Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic is to submit to the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Kazakhstan a draft republican law On Making Amends to the Law of the Republic of Kazakhstan—On Taxation Operations With Securities.

The above decree comes into force from the day of its publishing.

[Signed] President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nazarbayev.

President Leaves for Meeting With Yeltsin

LD2703053994 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0521
GMT 27 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Vladimir Akimov]

[Text] Almaty 27 Mar, TASS—President Nursultan Nazarbayev and his wife left for the capital of the Russian Federation on Sunday, one day earlier than planned, for a meeting with Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

Nazarbayev had serious grounds to change the time of departure: the joint working group in charge of preparations for Kazakhstan-Russia summit talks failed to reach complete understanding on all items put on the agenda of the forthcoming talks.

Most likely, Nazarbayev wants to get acquainted with the sides' viewpoints on the spot to be ready to make appropriate political decisions and, possibly, even introduce appropriate adjustments to the position of his country's experts.

Local analysts believe that similar steps are now being taken by the Russian side as well. The two states attach paramount importance to maintaining and developing the historically established close mutual relations. Therefore, it is highly probable that the positions of Kazakhstan and Russia will draw closer together even before the two leaders hold an official meeting.

As far as differences are concerned, sources close to the leadership of the republic name several of them, including problems connected with the future of Baykonur cosmodrome, the conclusion of a customs union between the two countries, the elimination of the aftermath of the tests of nuclear weapons on the territory of Kazakhstan, a prolongation of the agreement to maintain the specialisation of defence-industry enterprises, and the repayment of mutual debts for the rendered services and the earlier supplied products.

Agreement on Baykonur Cosmodrome Under Threat

LD2603105494 Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian 0930
GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Some of the documents prepared for signing at the Russian-Kazakhstan Summit have been withdrawn from

the discussions, a POSTFACTUM correspondent learned on 25 March from informed sources in the Kazakhstani Cabinet of Ministers. Minister Sergey Tereshchenko. [Moscow 2x2 Television in Russian at 1330 GMT on 26 March 1994 repeats this report adding the following information at this point: "The treaties on customs union and dealing with the consequences of nuclear testing at the Semipalatinsk nuclear testing ground have been withdrawn from the talks at the initiative of the Russian side, which also declined a protocol on extending the agreement on retaining specialized defense industry enterprises and a protocol on implementing the agreement on cooperation on developing fuel and energy complexes."'] As POSTFACTUM learned from the same sources, the fate of the agreement on the status of the Baykonur cosmodrome is also in doubt, despite the fact that the Kazakhstani side has made significant concessions on the amount of lease payments to be made.

Kazakh, Russian Border Oblasts Discuss Economic Issues

LD2603151094 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 1000 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Talks have been held in Pavlodar, Kazakhstan, by delegations of border oblasts of Kazakhstan and Russia. Here is our correspondent Andrey Kondrashov:

Delegations of four border oblasts of Kazakhstan and Russia took part in the talks—Yekaterinburg, Chelyabinsk, Omsk, and Pavlodar. A package of economic issues was discussed. Every year 24 million tonnes of Ekibastuz coal are supplied to Siberian power stations from Kazakhstan. According to the Kazakhstan newspaper PANORAMA, the Russian energy sector's arrears reached around 80 billion rubles, 17 billion of which have already been paid. The remainder of the debt is to be paid in April.

Agreement was reached at the meeting to set up a joint Russian-Kazakh joint-stock company of the open type, founded by the power, coal and machine-building sectors of the two countries. It is intended that the draft agreement among the administrations of the four oblasts will be submitted to a forthcoming meeting of leaders and heads of state of Russia and Kazakhstan.

U.S.-Kazakhstan Oil Deal Requires New Pipeline

PM2803082594 Moscow ROSSIYSKAYA GAZETA in Russian 25 Mar 94 p 6

[ITAR-TASS report: "United States-Kazakhstan: Caspian Oil Pipeline"]

[Text] Kadyr Baykenov, Kazakhstani minister of energy and fuel resources, stated this week that Kazakhstan had agreed to all the terms of the proposed oil transportation agreement between the Caspian Oil Consortium and the "Tengiz-Chevroil" company.

The agreement, an ITAR-TASS correspondent reports from New York, envisages allowing Kazakhstan to export crude oil lifted from the Tengiz and Korolevskoye Fields. Moreover, given the very limited throughput of Russian pipelines, Kazakhstan considers it expedient to rapidly complete the construction of pipelines for the Caspian Oil Consortium. This decision was confirmed at meetings in London with representatives of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development [EBRD], which, as expected, will be financing part of the project to build the Caspian oil pipeline. Kazakhstan and Russia are shareholders in the EBRD.

Kyrgyzstan

Prime Minister Leaves for Conference in South Korea

LD2603142694 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Kyrgyz 0000 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] The government's press service reports that Prime Minister Dzhumagulov left for the Republic of Korea on 25 March. He will be attending the second international conference: Peace and the 21st century, from 26 to 29 March. It is expected that Dzhumagulov will deliver a speech on the problems of democratic transitions and economic reforms in Kyrgyzstan.

Apart from this, the head of the government intends to establish business contacts between Kyrgyzstan and the Republic of Korea. Dzhumagulov stated that he will try to do everything so as to conclude mutually beneficial agreements with businessmen from Korea and other countries of the world and meet leaders of companies. He will hand over to them a package of proposals on economic cooperation from the Government of Kyrgyzstan.

President Nazarbayev's Visit to Moscow Previewed

LD2503195494 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1732 GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: Compiled by Nikolay Zhrebtsov, Andrey Petrovsky; edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] President Nursultan Nazarbayev attributes great significance to his future visit to Moscow during which he is scheduled to discuss bilateral Kazakh-Russian relations, Interfax learned at the presidential press service.

According to the latest reports of the press service, Nazarbayev is due to leave for Moscow on Sunday, 27 March. Earlier, INTERFAX learned at the Kazakh embassy in Moscow that Nazarbayev is expected to arrive in Moscow on Monday, 28 March.

The program of the visit is being specified. Apart from scheduled negotiations with President Boris Yeltsin, Nazarbayev intends to meet with leaders of the Russian

Federal Assembly's chambers Vladimir Shumeyko and Ivan Rybkin, as well as the patriarch of Moscow and all Russia Alexiy 2nd.

The Kazakh president plans to deliver a lecture in the Moscow State University.

According to the presidential press service, bilateral agreements on military-technical cooperation, peaceful use of atomic energy and cooperation in the spheres of culture, science and health care have been prepared for the signing in Moscow.

Currently, Russian and Kazakh experts are holding intensive consultations in Moscow preparing documents on further use of the Baykonur cosmodrome and conditions of its lease by Russia. The documents are to be signed by the presidents of the two countries.

Interfax learned that on Thursday head of the commission on talks with Russia, Kazakh Vice-Premier Galym Abilseitov and head of the Russian delegation at talks, General Director of the Russian Space Agency Yuriy Koptev held a face-to-face meeting. Details of the talks have not been reported.

Government Asks Akayev To Postpone Land Reform

LD2503222494 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Kyrgyz 0000 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The government, at its regular meeting on 23 March, addressed the president with the request to postpone the implementation of the decree on the land reform. In particular, the allocation of plots of land until the end of this year's harvest campaign so as to not create turmoil during the field work. The request by the Defense Ministry to allocate them plots of land for farming has also been refused. Those attending the meeting found it reasonable if the military, instead of owing allotments, would cooperate with farmers and farms in the production of agricultural products.

The government's meeting, which was chaired by Abbas Dzhumagulov, discussed all the suggestions of the commission on elaborating a resolution on the urgent measures aimed at carrying out the republican land reform in accordance with the president's decree. The commission has elaborated a precise document that will be used as a manual by the agricultural sector of the economy. In particular, the MinSelkhozprod (the ministry of agricultural products) can only address issues connected with land reform, and it is also made responsible for it. It will cooperate with ministries and departments. The agricultural committees on the sites will contribute to this.

The document also specified tasks of educational, cattle-breeding, and seed farms, as well as some other issues. Special emphasis was paid to the role of the mass media in covering the land reform and ways of implementing it. The document is to be published in the press.

Pakistan To Supply Medicine, Equipment, Training

LD2603143694 Bishkek Kyrgyz Radio First Program Network in Kyrgyz 0000 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] An agreement, which has been signed by the leadership of the Kyrgyzfarmacia [pharmacy] company and the Elkashan Private Ltd. company from Karachi foresees supplies of medicine on consignment terms from Pakistan to Kyrgyzstan. Representatives of this company have recently visited Bishkek and discussed not only volumes of supplies, but also prospects for further cooperation.

Experts from Pakistan intend to assist us in the production of medication as well as training experts and providing us with sophisticated equipment. The project is financed by a credit, which has been allocated by the government of this Asiatic country.

Tajikistan

Authorities Deny Plans for Moscow Talks With Opposition

LD2603201594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] On Saturday, Shukurdzhon Zukhurov, Tajikistan's Labor and Employment Minister and leader of the republican delegation at the future negotiations with the representatives of the opposition, refuted information stating that these negotiations would be held in the near term in Moscow with Russia's mediation. In his interview with INTERFAX, Zukhurov indicated that Tajikistan's official delegation is not going to Moscow to meet with the opposition in the near term.

In his words, the Tajik leadership has not received an invitation from another mediator at the negotiations, a special envoy of the UN General Secretary. In addition, members and leadership of the delegation are to meet with the Tajik leadership to concretely determine authorities and mandate of the delegation, he said.

"We shall hardly be able to work out this issues before 28 March," said Zukhurov. He also reported that the delegation headed by him is ready to sit at the negotiations table with the opposition's delegation headed by any of its leaders. "At the same time he said that it is unclear who will head the delegation and how many members will be in it.

Latifi Outlines Opposition Concerns, Goals

944K0936A Moscow OBSHCAYA GAZETA in Russian No 11, 18 Mar 94 p 2

[Interview with Otakhon Latifi, chairman of the board of the coordinating center of Tajikistan's democratic forces in the CIS countries, by OBSHCAYA GAZETA correspondent Aleksandr Karpov; place and date not given: "Opposition Is for National Accord"]

[Text] The Tajik problem may only be solved by political methods—this is the main result of negotiations between the delegation of forces in opposition to the current official Dushanbe with the Russian MFA [Ministry of Foreign Affairs] leadership, which were held under UN sponsorship in Teheran. Our correspondent, Aleksandr Karpov, interviews a member of the Tajik delegation at this meeting—Otakhon Latifi, chairman of the board of the coordinating center of Tajikistan's democratic forces in the CIS.

[Karpov] Why did the negotiations process on the Tajik problem begin with, of all things, the opposition meeting with the Russian political leadership?

[Latifi] It is our deep conviction that negotiations with current Tajik authorities are impossible without first discussing the Russian factor. Russia, which alternately supported either one or the other side in the confrontation, found itself moving willy-nilly, directly involved in this conflict. Today, the official regime in Tajikistan is holding up only because of the presence of the Russian army, which in its actions transcends the boundaries of peacekeeping tasks and constantly interferes in the internal affairs of a sovereign independent state. This has been acknowledged by international experts, Russian analysts, and the Russian press. One of the important results of the meeting in Teheran is the general understanding that peacekeeping forces in our Republic may even be represented by Russia's 201st motorized rifle division, but on the condition that it will be authorized by the United Nations.

[Karpov] Opposition leaders' statements at various times often mentioned Russia's special geopolitical interests in Tajikistan. What specifically do they have in mind?

[Latifi] The economy; it is the uranium industry in Leninabad Oblast. Do not forget that the first Soviet atomic bomb was built using uranium ore mined around the city of Chkalovsk. Many among our enterprises also have direct ties with plants and factories in the Russian Federation. In the political sphere, Tajikistan has always been and remains a gate to the East for Russia; Russian positions in Iran, Afghanistan, and India depend to a considerable extent on relations with Tajikistan. Anyway, how can one discard ties that go back more than 200 years?

[Karpov] For a long time, Tajikistan's official authorities kept saying that they could not sit down at the negotiating table with the opposition, whose "hands are in blood up to the elbows." The opposition, in turn, maintained that they have nothing to discuss with a puppet government...

[Latifi] Most such mutual accusations are a thing of the past. During his latest trip to Tashkent, Emomali Rakhmonov said that he is willing to sit down at the negotiating table with any official representative of the opposition forces regardless of his political views. As to blood

on the opposition's hands, I want to remind that opposition in Tajikistan had never been in power. Right now, however, the important point is that there is an opportunity to reach a sensible solution, in which there should be no place for ambitions.

[Karpov] Criminal proceedings, which are investigated by the Republic procuracy, have been initiated against many opposition leaders in Tajikistan...

[Latifi] One of the terms of truce is that all these proceedings will be terminated.

[Karpov] Probably the first round of negotiations between the opposition and the representatives of Tajikistan's official authorities will take place soon. What proposals will the opposition forces leaders bring to this meeting?

[Latifi] Tajikistan's authorities more or less control the situation in Dushanbe, but certainly not in the republic as a whole. Therefore, a period of transition to stabilization must be defined. During this time, in our opinion, a state council of national accord should be set up, which will be comprised of new, absolutely neutral people. Over the period of two or three years they will have to make a tremendous effort to return all refugees to the Motherland (about a million people); conduct a population census; disarm all—both opposition and government—illegal armed formations, and only then draft and adopt a new national constitution and conduct elections to the supreme bodies of authority. The opposition does not thirst for power. All we want is national accord.

Turkmenistan

Russian Army To Help Implement Military Doctrine

LD2603142394 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1153 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Report by ITAR-TASS correspondent Lyudmila Glazovskaya]

[Text] Ashgabat 26 Mar, TASS—Turkmenistan will realize its military doctrine with assistance from the Russian Army, President Saparmurad Niyazov said here on Saturday. Speaking at a meeting of the Turkmen Defence Council, he corroborated his idea with "concurrence of the strategic interests of Turkmenistan and Russia."

The president also spoke of his intention to speed up the process of integrating Turkmenistan into the international community by joining NATO's "Partnership for Peace" programme.

Niyazov Supports CIS Summit Agenda

LD2603155094 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1347 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] In a message to Russia's President Yeltsin, his Turkmen counterpart Niyazov voiced full support for

the upcoming CIS summit's agenda, but warned that Turkmenistan would stay away from new CIS structures.

He admitted at an earlier meeting with Turkmen foreign ministry officials that each CIS session had been a headache for him, especially hearing calls for Turkmenistan's more active role in efforts to settle conflicts in Tajikistan and Abkhazia or invitations to military or economic alliances. Many leaders "advocate unions because they fail to cope with the difficulties that have cropped up after their country became independent," he said.

NATO Delegation Discusses Cooperation, Training

LD2603201694 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1930 GMT 26 Mar 94

[From the "Slavyanka" program of the Russian Defense Ministry]

[Text] Turkmenia [Turkmenistan] intends to start cooperating with NATO in the near future, according to Boris Shikhmuradov, the republican prime minister. Turkmenia's participation in the Partnership for Peace program was the center of attention at the talks between the Turkmenistani leadership and a NATO delegation in Ashkhabat [Ashgabat]. The talks also discussed prospects for NATO's assistance to Turkmenia and in particular, assistance in training personnel for the national armed forces.

Niyazov on Cooperation With Moscow, Human Rights

LD2603202794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Turkmenian diplomats should clearly see the goals of the state, trust the government policy and be able to explain it to representatives of other countries, President Saparmurad Niyazov said at a meeting with Turkmenian Foreign Ministry officials on 26 March.

Niyazov pointed out that Turkmenia [Turkmenistan] will cooperate with Russia on an equal basis whatever the power in Moscow. In his opinion, Turkmenia should select five or six states for having close relations with them. According to Niyazov, all states neighboring Turkmenia can be chosen.

Niyazov expressed surprise that Western countries continue to accuse Turkmenia of violating human rights and democracy. He said that there is not a single political prisoner in the Republic and anybody can organize a party "with its regulations, program, supporters and which acts within the framework of the Constitution and the law."

"We are building an open society in which all human rights will be respected. Everybody can express his/her opinion, but when a majority takes a decision, a minority should follow," Niyazov said.

Uzbekistan

President Issues Decree on Tax, Customs Law Observance

LD2303183994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1549 GMT 23 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature: No. 56 (546); Compiled by Nikolay Zherebtsov, Andrey Petrovsky, Edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] President Islam Karimov has ordered a range of measures to tighten control over the observance of the country's tax and customs laws.

His decree published in the local press instructs the state taxation committee to bring criminal charges in cases of tax evasion, illegal exports and other offences damaging to Uzbekistan's economic interests.

Prosecuting officers, the security services and interior ministry are instructed to speed up investigation into offences related to tax evasion and illegal exports so that no culprit goes unpunished.

In one other decree, Karimov ordered an improvement of the country's banking system and stabilization of financial and crediting relations. Banks are told to finalize the installation of computers by 1 October.

The decree also envisages the introduction of computerized postal services ensuring an automatic stock taking of available cash and prevention of illicit payment or crediting operations. Uzbekistan is planning to tighten crediting and monetary policies and bring an end to easy term government credits to different sectors of the economy.

In this connection, the government has given local banks four weeks in which to study the experience gained by leading world and CIS banks before submitting proposals on how to readjust local bank operations to market requirements.

Text of Decree, Customs Law

LD2603171294 Tashkent NARODNOYE SLOVO in Russian 22 Mar 94 p 3

[Text] Decree of the president of the Republic of Uzbekistan on measures to step up monitoring of compliance with tax and customs legislation in the Republic of Uzbekistan in order to implement measures aimed at the protection of the Republic's economic interests and property rights, the development of entrepreneurship and the implementation of a single state tax and customs policy:

1. The state taxation committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan should take additional measures to step up the monitoring of compliance with tax and customs legislation.

To this end, incidents of tax evasion, duties, and other compulsory payments on a large and especially large scale; the illegal export of goods and material resources from the Republic; and other contraventions that harm the economic interests of the state, must be comprehensively probed. Criminal prosecutions must be brought in accordance with legislation, investigations carried out and material relevant to investigations passed to the law enforcement bodies.

2. The Procurator's Office, the National Security Service and the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Uzbekistan must organize the immediate and efficient investigation of crimes concerning compliance with tax and customs legislation, ensuring that crimes are inevitably punished.

3. The judicial bodies of the Republic should be instructed to ensure effective and priority examination of the aforementioned category of criminal cases in the courts, giving wide publicity via the media to sentences passed and decisions returned.

4. The procuracy of the Republic of Uzbekistan should be instructed to exercise effective scrutiny of the investigation of material passed to the law enforcement bodies by the tax and customs bodies and to bring in strict monitoring of the progress, thoroughness, quality and time-scale of the investigation of criminal cases arising from this material, ensuring the compulsory involvement of procurators in the hearing of these cases in the courts.

5. The procurator general, the chairman of the Supreme Court, the minister of justice and the chairman of the state taxation committee of the Republic of Uzbekistan must call the heads of tax and customs bodies, as well as town and rayon procurators and judges, to strict account, in accordance with legislation, for red tape, an easygoing attitude or lack of principle, as well as for breaches of the deadlines set for cases to be heard.

The heads of the above bodies should report on the progress of implementation of this decree and supply the government with the necessary information once a quarter.

[Signed] I. Karimov, president of the Republic of Uzbekistan.

[Dated] Tashkent, 18 March 1994

Karimov Decrees Creation of Joint-Stock Commercial Bank

LD2303134094 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in Russian 1108 GMT 23 Mar 94

[Text] According to a decree from President Islam Karimov, a specialized joint-stock commercial bank to assist trade and commerce will be created in Uzbekistan. The new bank will service trade organizations and enact the crediting of trade-purchase operations between enterprises of trade and other branches of the national economy. According to the presidential decree, the founders of the bank will be the Finance Ministry, the Central Bank, the National Bank of Foreign Economic Activity, the Republican Trade Association, and the Union of Consumer Societies.

Government Measures To Stabilize Currency Announced

LD2503160894 Tashkent UZBEKISTAN APN in 1128 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Excerpts] [No dateline as received] Measures are being taken by Uzbekistan for the stabilization of the credit-currency relations. The government of the Republic has instructed the Central Bank to strictly limit credit and cash flow. [passage omitted] The Finance Ministry and the Central Bank must, within a period of one month, formulate the mechanism for the formation and exploitation of the gold and currency reserves of the Central Bank to create a stabilizing fund and provide measures to support the course of the national currency. Enterprises with all forms of ownership, including those involved in trading operations with states of the former union, must give 15 percent of their earnings to the hard currency funds of the Republic. Specialists consider these measures adopted by the Government of the Republic of Uzbekistan to be an important stage in preparing for the introduction of the national currency that will replace the current transitional sum-coupon.

Government Cuts Gas Supplies to Kazakhstan

LD2603142794 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1100 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Uzbekistan has cut by one-quarter the deliveries of natural gas to Kazakhstan. This is already the second penalty since the beginning of this month on the part of the Uzbek side, and it is connected with Kazakhstan's arrears in payments, which amount to \$90 million U.S. dollars to date.

Armenia

Air Action Against Goradiz, Stepanakert Reported

NC2503195994 Yerevan Radio Yerevan in Azeri 1430
GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Dear listeners, we now present a report on the latest incidents in the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] and at the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Several observers are convinced that the intensified activity of Azerbaijan's military forces at the front lines is linked with the multilateral talks that are being held in Moscow with the mediation of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. NKR experts are also participating in the talks. Obviously, Azerbaijan's leaders wish to direct a new wave of pressure on the NKR.

The NKR Defense Army Headquarters has disclosed that bloody clashes took place at several important heights close to Alkhanly in Fizulinskiy Rayon yesterday. Some 38 Azerbaijani officers and men were killed and dozens of troops were wounded in the fighting. Azerbaijan also lost military equipment and armored vehicles. One of its T-72 tanks and a rocket launcher were destroyed. Two men were killed and 11 others were wounded on the Armenian side.

Calm Along Azerbaijan Border

NC2603130994 Yerevan SNARK in English 1054 GMT
26 Mar 94

[Text] Yerevan, March 26 (SNARK)—Calm exists at the Armenian-Azerbaijani border for two days, press-service of the Armenian Defence Department told SNARK.

This week the situation at the border has become tense. Tension was caused by the firings of the contiguous Armenian and Azerbaijani settlements. Both sides' sources inform of the victims.

Calm Along Nagorno-Karabakh Front

NC2603134394 Yerevan SNARK in English 1151 GMT
26 Mar 94

[Text] Stepanakert, March 26 (SNARK)—After violent fights, calm has again settled at the Karabakh front, interrupted only by sporadic shots. Thus, as told SNARK the press-service of Karabakh Defence Army, the defenses of Armenian forces were shelled in the direction of Berdashen village (East Karabakh). So far there was no information of victims.

Azerbaijan's military units resumed their attacks in Fizulinskiy Rayon yesterday morning. They tried to retake the positions they lost earlier but they failed to do so. NKR's armed units repulsed the attacks and forced the enemy forces to retreat to their former positions.

Azerbaijan's attack aircraft dropped three heavy bombs on the NKR's defensive positions in Fizulinskiy Rayon

yesterday morning. We have not yet received a report on the number of casualties. The Armenian positions in Novruzlu and Yusifdzhany in Agdamskiy Rayon were fired on with machine guns on the same day. No other significant incident took place at the front lines. The NKR defense units maintain their control of the strategically important Omar Pass.

Azerbaijani Air Force units have taken an active part in the operations the ground forces carried out during the past two days. The neighboring republic's attack aircraft have bombed the NKR positions. According to a report we received from the NKR Defense Army press service a short time ago, two enemy aircraft dropped cluster bombs on NKR positions close to Goradiz today. The report said that even Azerbaijani troops were affected by the effects of that attack. Meanwhile, Azerbaijani aircraft also tried to bomb Stepanakert. However, the NKR air defense forces successfully blocked the attack.

Intensive combat operations did not take place at the front lines yesterday. The confrontation was in the form of positional fighting. Exchanges of fire took place between the warring sides in various parts of the front line.

According to NKR reconnaissance units, Azerbaijan's military command has maintained its effort to deploy reinforcements and military hardware in various parts of the confrontation areas.

An incident has not occurred on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan from last night until 1600 this afternoon.

Karabakh Positions Shelled in Martuni

LD2603154694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1420
GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ARMENPRESS correspondent Leonid Nersesyan for TASS]

[Text] Yerevan March 26 TASS—Azeri artillery has been shelling Karabakh self-defence positions in the Berdashen populated locality of the Martuni region all day long.

Relative lull is reported from other front sections by the Karabakh defence army headquarters.

NKR Forces Resist New Azeri Attack

NC2803144994 Yerevan Armenia's Radio First
Program Network in Armenian 1300 GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] The situation became exceedingly tense on the Karabakh fronts this morning. The Nagorno-Karabakh Republic [NKR] Defense Army Press Service reported that the Azerbaijani Army launched an offensive toward Agdam in the east of the confrontation line at 0315 on 28 March. Considerable enemy forces and military aircraft are taking part in the operation.

According to reports received at noon, NKR Defense Army units are resisting the enemy's pressure and inflicting heavy losses on him.

No substantial changes have taken place on the other fronts in the past few days.

President on Reopening Metsamor Power Station

LD2503182394 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1540 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan called the reopening of the Armenia nuclear station "one of the most important tasks facing Armenia."

Speaking at a government meeting in the village of Metsamor where the station is located, the president expressed the opinion that the reopening of the station would enable Armenia to gain minimal energy independence and to avoid considerable losses from a transportation and energy blockade.

Ter-Petrosyan said that "a serious inspection at the international level" is to be carried out at the nuclear station in the near future. He said that this year the financing of work on the station was included in the state budget. At the same time, he "expects foreign aid."

In this connection, Ter-Petrosyan pointed to the particular significance of the Armenian-Russian agreement on the nuclear station signed in Moscow last week. "I am sure that its implementation will speed up the reopening of the station," he pointed out.

Armenian experts believe that the station can be launched into operation in a year and a half, costing about 70 million dollars.

The Armenian station was shut down due to public demand after the December 1988 earthquake in Armenia, although it was not damaged at that time.

The Armenian government confirmed the station's status as a special facility.

The government managed to find money to pay wages to the personnel of the station according to a special tariff network. From April 1 the average wages at the station will be 2,200 drams or 20 minimal wages in Armenia. In addition, workers will receive 50 drams for nutrition on a daily basis. It was also decided to rename the station from Armenian into Metsamor.

Ter-Petrosyan 'Most Popular Politician'

NC2603134294 Yerevan SNARK in English 1151 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Yerevan, March 26 (SNARK)—Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan is again the most popular politician in the Republic. This was the comment given by Gevork Poghosyan, Director of the Sociological Research Center, National Academy of Sciences, to results of the recent poll, carried out by his service. He

told SNARK there was a time when President was inferior by his rating to the Vice President Gagik Arutunyan, and to the former Foreign Minister Raffi Govhanyan. But now, no politician in Armenia can match with his popularity.

"The second, and far behind, was the former Communist Leader of Armenia Karen Demirchyan, said the sociologist. According to the poll results, 9 percent of the Yerevan citizens trust the President completely, 31 percent partially, and 52 percent do not at all. Such a rating may be considered as normal, with account of drastic situation in Armenia", told Poghosyan.

In his opinion, if Levon Ter-Petrosyan nominated himself as a candidate for the new presidential elections, he would have won.

Azerbaijan

Ministry Protests Statements of Russian Deputy

NC2503214594 Baku TURAN in English 1729 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Baku (March 24) TURAN—Today Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent the note to Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Azerbaijan makes a protest due to illegal arrival of Deputy of the Russian Duma, Nikolay Lysenko, in Khankendi [Stepanakert] and his statements which are aimed against sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. "Such statements of Russian Deputy can spoil Azerbaijani-Russian relations", says the document.

The leader of the Russian National-Republican Party, Nikolai Lysenko, said on March 18 in Yerevan that "Russia must recognize Nagorno-Karabakh republic". He added that "Nagorno-Karabakh has the right to exist as a sovereign republic. Azerbaijan's aggression against Karabakh would have been impossible if Turkey did not back it. Russia, Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh have common geostrategic interests".

Russian Wish To Deploy Troops in CIS Area Seen

NC2803094694 Baku Azerbaijan Radio Televiziyasi Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Commentary by Qulu Meherremov]

[Text] The West has considered Deputy Defense Minister Kondratyev's statement that Moscow is prepared to deploy Russia's peacekeeping units in adjacent territory from various angles. Several political commentators have assessed Russia's policy on using force as the beginning of a new cold war and a wave of military pressure directed on the former Soviet Union, particularly the republics in the Caucasus.

The statement was not a new development in Russia's policy of strengthening its military presence in the CIS

republics. But Kondratyev's statement indicated that Russia has ignored the international community's opinion and challenged international norms. That was a new and undesirable factor in his statement.

Undoubtedly, one of the reasons Russia moved to use force is the radical political developments in that country. Another is Russia's failure to realize its views on international and regional developments during the past few years.

Russia tried to find a legal solution to two problems in the international arena until as recently as yesterday. It called for international status for the MDB [not further identified], as in the case of the CSCE. It will be recalled that Moscow has an influential position in the MDB. Russia called on the world to agree to the deployment of its military forces in the troubled areas in the former Soviet Union as peacekeeping units. But the international community has rejected its proposals on the grounds that they conflicted with international norms. Consequently, Russia now seems to have abandoned its diplomatic initiatives and adopted a different policy.

Deputy Defense Minister Kondratyev's statement has revealed a sharp turn in Russia's policy. Naturally, that has created several questions in people's minds. Why does Russia, which has deployed military units in several republics on the bases of bilateral agreements, insist on giving the status of a peacekeeping force to two of its divisions?

That aspect promised nothing favorable for Azerbaijan. Russia has no military troops in Azerbaijan and Baku does not wish to allow any to be deployed in the Republic. Everyone knows that Russia covertly directs pressure on the sides involved in the Karabakh problem. Apparently, the deployment of its military units in the region as a peacekeeping force will create a favorable opportunity for it—politically and legally—to direct pressure on the sides without having to conceal it.

Azerbaijan's political leaders have often stated that they oppose the deployment of Russia's troops in the disputed region under any title. They believe that the Russian troops will most probably be based between the warring sides, that is, in Karabakh. But that will make the dispute worse. Undoubtedly, the move will prolong the dispute indefinitely and create an undesirable situation for Azerbaijan.

Despite its assuring but misleading aspects, the deployment of Russia's military forces in the region in the form of a peacekeeping force could place Azerbaijan in an unfavorable political and military situation.

Regarding Kondratyev's fearful statement, REUTER has quoted Western observers as saying that the effort made to realize its stipulations will, undoubtedly, create a clash between the Western world and Russia, which is already in a difficult situation.

Musa Statements on Egyptian Support Cited

*NC2503184094 Baku Azerbaijan Radio Televiziyasi
Television Network in Azeri 1600 GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Text] Foreign Ministry press service reported that in his letter to the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Gasan Gasanov, Egyptian Foreign Minister 'Amr Musa said that Egypt resolutely condemns the occupation of the Azerbaijani lands, recognizes Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and calls on foreign troops to withdraw from these lands in keeping with the relevant UN Security Council resolutions.

The Egyptian foreign minister also said that his government decided to send humanitarian assistance to Azerbaijan as a manifestation of the Egyptian people's support for and solidarity with the Azerbaijani people.

The Cultural, Science, and Ecology Department of the Republic's Foreign Ministry informed the AZERTAC correspondent that humanitarian assistance is on the way and is expected to arrive in Baku in the coming days.

Strong Iranian Reaction to Plane Downing Urged

*NC2503220494 Baku Azerbaijan Radio Televiziyasi
Television Network in Azeri 1645 GMT 25 Mar 94*

[Commentary by Sahib Aliyev]

[Text] It was week ago that the Iranian C-130 was shot down. Despite the passage of a considerable time, the causes of this incident still remain a mystery, and two questions arise from this mystery. First, why, like the act of terrorism committed in the Baku metro, did this incident take place on the eve of Novruz? Second, what is the aim behind the dissemination of reports by the Russian and Armenian mass media that the plane crashed due to supposedly technical faults?

And this despite the fact that, just a day after this incident, authoritative sources in Azerbaijan, citing indisputable facts, announced that the plane was shot down.

Leaving aside this statement by the Azerbaijani side, an Iranian expert visiting the scene of the incident two days ago also confirmed that it was shot down.

And contrary to the Armenian claims, the Iranian side also announced that the plane was not off course, but was forced to fly at low altitude because strong pressure caused cracks on its windows.

In short, it is a fact that the plane was hit. It should be kept in mind that apparently it was shot down by those who have tried to link this incident to technical problems or weather conditions; that is, by the Armenians.

Many ascribe Iran's failure to react strongly to this incident to its unwillingness to harm its warm ties with Armenia.

In our view, Iran is waiting for the completion of the formal investigation; and one of the strongest states in the region cannot remain indifferent to such a tragic death of 32 of its citizens, because if such indifference is observed in the Iranian Islamic Republic, which passes itself off as the ardent supporter of Moslems and Islam in the world, it might create, at the very least, disappointment among the Islamic population of the former USSR, and trust in it might be shaken.

Reopening of Armenian AES Seen as 'Real Threat'

LD2603103694 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 0800 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] People in Azerbaijan are concerned at the report that preparations are under way to reopen the Armenian nuclear power station.

A statement of the Azerbaijani president's press service says that recommissioning putting the AES [nuclear electric power station] in a country that is conducting active combat operations against Azerbaijan involving the use of the latest weapons represents a real threat to the safety of the countries of the region.

Further on Statement

NC2703185994 Baku TURAN in English 1025 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Baku (March 26) TURAN—Azerbaijan is deeply concerned about the reactivation of Armenia's electrical power station, reports a statement from the press service of the Presidential Cabinet.

"Reactivating the atomic electric power station in Armenia is dangerous for Azerbaijan especially since a war is being waged between the two countries. There is no doubt that Armenia will use the nuclear materials for military purposes which violates international norms. It is also dangerous for ecology", says the document.

The statement further reads that in this context, the Azeri government calls upon the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to consider the power plant's reactivation; ecological, military and political consequences of this step should be thoroughly examined and Armenia must observe its obligations of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Ministry Reports Armenian Shelling of Settlements

NC2503180894 Baku Azerbaijan Radio Televiziya Television Network in Azeri 1645 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry press service reported that the situation remains tense in our republic's northwestern regions bordering on Armenia. The border settlements in Kazakhskiy Rayon came under intensive shelling from armored cars and artillery throughout 24 March. (?Seven) residents were injured.

The enemy shelled our positions around Goradiz with various types of weapons on the night of 24-25 March. Our fighters are dealing a appropriate reply to the enemy.

A relative calm is prevailing on the other sectors of the front.

INTERFAX Reports Shelling, Losses

LD2603201894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] On Saturday populated centers in Azerbaijan's Taz and Kazakh regions bordering Armenia (the republic's north-west) were subjected to artillery shelling from the contiguous territory, Azerbaijani Defense Ministry reported to Interfax.

Populated centers situated in Azerbaijan's Agdam region came under fire on Friday evening and Saturday morning.

At the night of March 26 the Armenian party undertook several attempts to launch an offensive in the southern part of the front in the direction of the rail way junction of Goradiz (situated on the border with Iran). One Armenian tank was destroyed in the course of hostilities. The attackers were moved back to the starting positions.

Ministry Says Offensive Rebuffed

LD2803133494 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1311 GMT 28 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondents Sevindh Abdullayeva and Viktor Shulman]

[Text] Baku March 28 TASS—Azerbaijani troops rebuffed an Armenian offensive in the direction of Agdam in the disputed enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh on Monday, the Azerbaijani Defence Ministry said.

The Armenians had to retreat, sustaining heavy losses, from two villages they had seized earlier—Shirvanly and Garagashly. Fighting is now continuing ten kilometers northeast of Agdam.

The ministry said that the enemy continued shelling villages in northwestern Azerbaijan.

In a separate report, the press centre of the Nagorno-Karabakh defence army said earlier today that heavy fighting continued throughout last night and most of the day on Monday after Azerbaijani troops launched an offensive in the direction of Agdam.

The press centre said the operation involved tanks and aviation. Reports from Stepanakert, capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, said that Karabakh fighters were repelling the attack, inflicting severe damage on the enemy.

Reinforcements Massed in Fizuli

NC2703182194 Baku Radio Baku Network in Azeri
1700 GMT 27 Mar 94

["Text" of Azerbaijan Ministry of Defense press service
communiqué of 27 March]

[Text] Our towns along the Armenian border have been continuously fired on for three days now. [words indistinct] and the enemy has been observed to mass reinforcements and armored units in Fizulinskiy Rayon. Azerbaijan's positions in that area were fired on with various types of arms yesterday. Azerbaijan military units have been taking the necessary measures to strengthen their defensive lines and silence the enemy fire emplacements.

The situation in the other parts of the front line has been relatively peaceful.

Further Details on Fizuli Attacks

LD2703162994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1504
GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] On Sunday morning, a number of villages in the northwest of Azerbaijan were shelled from neighboring Armenia.

The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry told Interfax that the village of Mezem in the Kazakh region had become a target of an artillery and missile attack. Some of the civilians were wounded and several buildings were destroyed.

The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry reports that Armenian groups are being concentrated in the Fizuli direction of the southern section of the front. The situation is tranquil in other sections of the front.

Karabakh Reports Azeri Offensive

LD2803121294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1046
GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] Defense sources in Karabakh told Interfax that the military situation had dramatically deteriorated in the early hours of March 28.

Following extensive rocket and artillery barrage, Azeri forces are reported to be attacking the eastern and southern positions of the Karabakh units in the Agdam and Fizuli Districts along a 60 km front. Scores of armored vehicles and over 1000 infantry were supported by combat aircraft and helicopters of the Azeri army.

As of 12:00 local time, Karabakh forces were reported to hold their ground, inflicting heavy losses on the enemy.

Meanwhile, the Azeri Defense Ministry reported that the Armenian artillery had shelled villages of the Kazakh, Tauz and Ter-Ter Districts of Azerbaijan in early hours of Monday. There was no word of casualties.

According to the ministry, three Karabakh tanks and one armored combat vehicles were destroyed during the last two days.

The Azeri ministry reports that Azeri troops had captured strategically important positions in the Kelbajar District of Azerbaijan which is controlled by Armenian troops.

Georgia

Tbilisi Prepared To Resume Talks on Abkhazia

LD2803115794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1046
GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] Eduard Shevardnadze, the Georgian leader, welcomed Russia's willingness to promote resumption of talks aimed at resolving the Abkhazian crisis. "I am pleased to say that the Russian leaders promptly responded to my letter and expressed their concern over the latest aggravation of the conflict in Abkhazia," Shevardnadze told the Georgian news agency in response to the appeal made public by the Russian leadership on March 26.

According to Shevardnadze, "the Abkhazian forces recently started a large-scale offensive in the Abkhazian mountains, resulting in scores of killed and wounded on both sides, notably women and children." He said that "especially dangerous were also new attacks on Georgian villages on the banks of the Inguri River" as a result of which 200 families from the village of Okurcha, Zugdidi District, had joined the thousands of refugees.

Shevardnadze warned of the possibility of a new escalation of the conflict and added, "We support the Russian proposal on resuming the talks and are prepared to join them in Moscow very shortly."

He was convinced that Russia "was capable of exerting active influence and playing a positive role in resolving the Abkhazian problem, notably in resolving the most painful issue - the return of over 300,000 refugees."

Shevardnadze Welcomes Russia's Call

LD2703060594 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 0547
GMT 27 Mar 94

[By GIA correspondent for TASS]

[Text] Tbilisi March 27 TASS—"I welcome the readiness expressed by the Russian Government actively to promote a resumption of the peace talks to resolve the Abkhazian conflict, Eduard Shevardnadze told the Georgian news agency GIA in comment on the Russian Government's message to the leadership of Georgia and Abkhazia. The message was circulated on March 26.

"I am gratified to note that the leadership of Russia has promptly responded to my letter and expressed concern over the latest aggravation of the conflict in Abkhazia.

"We support the proposal expressed in the Russian Government's message to resume talks and are prepared to continue them in Moscow in the coming days", Shevardnadze emphasised.

The Georgian leader voiced conviction that Russia can exert an active influence and play a positive role in a settlement of the Abkhazian problem, primarily in securing the return of more than 300,000 refugees to their homes.

"I am confident that the authorities of the two countries will remain true to the accord signed in Tbilisi on February 3 and will accomplish the major mission to implement them. This is fully consonant with the consideration expressed by Boris Yeltsin about the historic necessity for strategic cooperation between Georgia and Russia", Shevardnadze said.

Abkhazia Supports Call for Settlement

LD2603184294 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1650 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Abkhazian Prime Minister Sokrat Djindjolia told Interfax Saturday [26 March] that the Abkhazian leaders welcomed the Russian call for the non-violent settlement of relations between Abkhazia and Georgia.

They shared Moscow's call for a political accommodation and reiterated their willingness to seek a negotiated settlement which was torpedoed by the Georgians. The negotiating process could resume on the removal of obstacles created by Tbilisi.

Djindjolia hoped Russia would keep playing an active role in the efforts to mediate a settlement.

Chikvaidze on Need for Settlement in Abkhazia

LD2503160494 Moscow ITAR-TASS World Service in Russian 1502 GMT 25 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS diplomatic correspondent Dmitriy Chubarov]

[Text] Moscow, 25 Mar—As before, Georgia is in favor of a political settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia. The Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandre Chikvaidze, who is in Moscow on a working visit said this at a news conference today.

In the minister's words, a dangerous concentration of armed formations is occurring on Abkhaz territory near the border with Georgia. All the same, Georgian diplomats are seeking ways out of the crisis. All of us—Georgians, Abkhazians, Ossetians—need to take an active part in devising the draft of the new constitution. This will make it possible to avoid confrontation, the minister said.

Chikvaidze said that the implementation of a preliminary accord with Russia on sending Russian peacekeeping forces into Georgia was one other way of settling the conflict.

Regarding the results of Eduard Shevardnadze's visit to the United States, the Georgian foreign minister put a figure on the loans granted to the republic within the framework of the United Nations—\$400 million. The Georgian diplomat noted that this money should help the republic's economy, which is in a very grave state.

Ultimatum Urges Georgia To Lay Down Arms

LD2503185994 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1713 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] In the afternoon of March 25 the command of the Abkhazian armed forces presented an ultimatum to the Georgian grouping staying in the mountains of Abkhazia's Gulripsh region. The ultimatum contains a demand to immediately lay down arms, the Abkhazian military department reported to Interfax.

If this is not done by the end of March 25 then, in accordance with the ultimatum, the Georgian grouping will be eliminated. Security will be guaranteed to those who will lay down their arms.

According to Abkhazia's Defense Ministry, in over two days of hostilities the Georgian side has lost 50 people killed and wounded.

As Sukhumi reports, hostilities between Georgian and Abkhazian formations in the mountains of the Gulripsh region were resumed on Thursday [24 March] after two Georgian battalions supported by armored vehicles tried to break through the tunnels of the Kodorsky canyon. In the morning of March 25 the Abkhazians entered the village of Nizhnyaya Lata where the headquarters of the Georgian grouping had been staying since last autumn and then went to the mountains after the Abkhazi side's defeat.

Meanwhile, Tbilisi asserts that the Abkhazian army is waging punitive operations against the civil population living in the mountainous villages.

Chikvaidze Peacekeepers Vital in Abkhazia

LD2503193594 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1718 GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Diplomatic Panorama" feature: Reports by Diplomatic Correspondents Dmitriy Voskoboynikov, Igor Porshnev, Vitaliy Trubetskoy and others]

[Text] Tbilisi is inclined to deploy Russian peacekeeping forces in Georgia even outside the frameworks of the UN operation. "It is impossible to solve the Abkhazian conflict without introduction of peacekeeping forces into Georgia," Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandre Chikvaidze declared at a press conference on Friday in Moscow.

In his words, this issue was being discussed during the recent visit of the head of the Georgian state Eduard Shevardnadze to New York. It was also discussed in Paris where Shevardnadze met with the UN General Secretary Butrus-Ghali.

Chikvaide pointed out that deployment of the UN peacekeeping forces and all preparatory operations will take three months. "But the time goes on and forces should be introduced as soon as possible. We hope for Russia. The thing is that Russia does not want to undertake anything unilaterally. It's quite clear because if Moscow coordinates its actions with the UN then this organization will finance peacemaking operations of the Russian troops," said Chikvaide.

In his words, it is necessary to work out a mechanism providing for the return of 300,000 Georgian refugees to Abkhazia. "The presence of such a large amount of refugees creates a tense situation in Georgia and even changes the mentality of the people," said Chikvaide. "The Abkhazian separatism can make a negative imprint on the situation in other countries, in Russia as well."

Responding to our Interfax correspondent, Chikvaide underlined that Georgia is ready to discuss political status of Abkhazia within Georgia. "I do not know how it would look like, but I can say for sure that Abkhazia will lose nothing by giving up what it possessed earlier in the sphere of its sovereignty. Now it should determine its position as soon as possible and to develop the country's Constitution together with the leaderships of Georgia, South Ossetia, and other autonomies, according to which we shall be able to live," said Chikvaide.

In response to another question Chikvaide said that NATO's Partnership for Peace program testifies to the fact that this organization "is looking for a new role." "The confrontation between military blocks sank into oblivion and NATO should find its ecological screen. This organization should either acquire new function or disband," said he.

In Chikvaide's opinion, the mechanism of Partnership for Peace program implementation "has not been developed till the very end." "If one knocks at the door and asks NATO forces to bring order in Georgia, it will not happen. However, we still do not lose hope that in the future the Partnership for Peace concept will actually help to increase efficiency of peacemaking operations," he concluded.

Chikvaide: Abkhazia Prepared To Attack Mingrelia

LD2503175594 Moscow NTV in Russian 1600 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Video report by correspondent Ivlev, including recorded comment by Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandr Chikvaide and Former Georgian Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani]

[Text] The Georgian foreign minister came to Moscow today where he gave a news conference for journalists. Of course, the main questions concerned the situation in Abkhazia.

[Ivlev] Today, Georgian Foreign Minister Aleksandr Chikvaide, who is in Moscow, said in regard to the events in Kondor Gorge that they are the result of the Abkhazian side shooting at civilians with Grad installations. Intercepted radio communications talk of a large concentration of Abkhazian military formations near Sukhumi. Supporters of the late ex-President Zviad Gamsakhurdia are ready to join them. Aleksandr Chikvaide spoke tersely about the aims of these military preparations by Abkhazia:

[Chikvaide] They are getting ready to start an attack on Mingrelia.

[Ivlev] However, at the news conference questions were asked not only by representatives of the mass media. Among those present, journalists were surprised to see Former Georgian Defense Minister Tengiz Kitovani. In an exclusive interview for NTV he gave his forecast. If no peaceful solution to the conflict is found, then just like the Soviet Union was able to somehow be victorious over Germany during the Second World War, so Georgia will in a fatal struggle conquer the Abkhazians, he said.

[Kitovani] But at present more important goals will be observed. In my opinion if a sensible, intelligent military chief is found, then other things will probably happen in Georgia.

[Ivlev] In reply to the question of whether a major war could break out, Tengiz Kitovani answered:

[Kitovani] This depends on the weather, both political and also how quickly the snow melts.

[Ivlev] Aleksey Ivlev, NTV, Moscow.

Abkhazian Units Reportedly Take Nizhniye Lata

LD2603061594 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 0100 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] According to an INTERFAX report, after fierce fighting Abkhazian units have occupied the village of Nizhniye Lata in the mountains in Gulripsh Rayon. Casualty figures for the sides have not been reported.

Moreover, Zurab Akvali in Tbilisi the head of the autonomous government of Abkhazia, accused the authorities in Sukhumi of destroying the Georgian village of Nabakevi in Gali Rayon.

Abkhazia Reports Liberation of Lata, Others

LD2603102094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1016 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By ITAR-TASS correspondent Irina Shchegoleva]

[Text] Sochi March 26 TASS—Over the past 24 hours of the Georgian-Abkhazian armed standoff, the Abkhazian troops liberated the village of Lata in the Kodorskoye Gorge on the territory of Abkhazia and moved on further in the mountainous region.

They have taken over three armoured vehicles, several artillery and anti-aircraft guns, a well-informed source in the Abkhazian Government told ITAR-TASS on Saturday.

"The village of Lata and the Kodorskoye Gorge are in the very heart of Abkhazia. We are fighting on Abkhazian territory and our troops are liberating Abkhazian villages," Abkhazian Deputy Prime Minister Vladimir Mikamba said.

Situation Tense; Inguri Shelled

LD2603164094 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 1609 GMT 26 Mar 94

[By GIA-TASS]

[Text] Tbilisi March 26 TASS—"The situation in Abkhazian Svanetia, including near the Lata settlement, remains tense. Fierce fighting has been reported from the area of settlements of Verkhnyaya Lata and Azhara. The enemy is using heavy materiel and artillery, there is loss of life, civilians are being evacuated," says a report of the Georgian Defence Ministry circulated by the ministry's press service here today.

"Abkhazian units opened intensive grenade launcher, mortar and automatic rifle fire in the area of the Khurcha and Nabakevi Georgian settlements on the bank of the Inguri river at 2 p.m. on Saturday. There are casualties among settlement civilians," head of the Zugdidi regional administration Edisher Chargazia told Georgian News Agency today.

Officials Arrive at Attack Site

LD2703210694 Moscow ITAR-TASS in English 2028 GMT 27 Mar 94

[By GIA-TASS]

[Text] Tbilisi March 27 TASS—Abkhazian armed formations continue attacks on Georgian villages located on the Abkhazian administrative territory, sources from the Georgian Defence Ministry told the Georgian Information Agency (GIA) on Sunday.

Reports say that apart from heavy guns and artillery, on Sunday, Abkhazian armed formations used helicopters.

Georgian military sources say that settlements in the Lata Gorge have been shelled by artillery and heavy guns. The villages of Khutia, Henschvishi, Sakeni, Myasnikovka and others came under fire on Sunday. Casualties among civilians have been reported.

Fighting has been going on for three days in the mountainous region of Svanteni on the Abkhazian territory,

GIA learned from the Georgian leader's press office. According to preliminary reports, 10 people were killed and 22 injured. Georgian sources said that the settlements were shelled by the Abkhazian side from "Grad" rocket launchers and howitzers.

Georgian Prime Minister Otar Patsatsiya and chairman of a temporary committee for the state of emergency, Dzhaba Ioseliani, have arrived in the area of the conflict.

Details on Conflict Escalation Reported

LD2703161894 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1504 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] The Georgian Defense Ministry's press service told Interfax on Sunday that Abkhazian formations were carrying out massive attacks on the Georgian villages located in Abkhazia's administrative territory. Over the past two days, villages in the Lata ravine were shelled and the villages of Khutia, Gentsvishi, Sakeni and Myasnikovka were burnt. Some of the civilians were killed and hundreds of people found refuge in the forests and mountains. The local population formed up units which are offering stubborn resistance.

The same source announced that besides attacks in the Kodor ravine, Abkhazian formations had launched an attack on the village of Khurcha in the Zugdidi Region, and destroyed the village of Ganakhleba in the Gali Region.

The Georgian Defense Ministry stated that Abkhazian units were using heavy equipment, artillery and helicopters. However, the Georgian and Abkhazian positions had not undergone any significant changes.

Georgian leader Eduard Shevardnadze's press service announced that since the escalation of the conflict in the Kodor ravine two days ago, Georgia had lost 10 soldiers and 22 civilians.

The press service of the Abkhazian mission in Moscow stated with reference to the Abkhazian Defense Ministry that Abkhazian formations had eliminated the Georgian subversive groups based in high-mountain villages of the Kodor ravine and restored peace in them.

The same source reports that Georgians lost three tanks, several anti-aircraft installations and an armored personnel carrier. Large amounts of weapons were seized.

The press center of the Temporary Committee for Emergency Situations in Western Georgia reports that the situation was relatively calm on the border with Abkhazia along the Inguri River and in the region of Zugdidi. Georgian Prime Minister Otar Patsatsia, who earlier arrived in Zugdidi, and Chairman of the Temporary State of Emergency Committee Dzhaba Ioseliani, continue an inspection tour of the region.

Ministry Reports Continued Attacks

LD2703203494 Moscow Radio Rossii Network in Russian 2000 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] The press service of Georgia's Defense Ministry reports that Abkhazian armed formations have continued their mass attacks on Georgian villages in the administrative territory of Abkhazia. A number of settlements in the Lata Gorge have been subjected to intensive shelling for the last two days, causing casualties among the civilian population.

Meanwhile, the press service of the Abkhazian mission in Moscow has announced that an operation to render harmless a number of Georgian terrorist groups in the Kodori Gorge has been successfully completed.

Ministry Says Militants Killed

LD2803094894 Tbilisi Radio Tbilisi Network in Georgian 0900 GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] Just a few minutes ago, we received a report from the Defense Ministry saying that fighting is continuing near the village of Kvemo Lata in Kodori Ravine. The [Georgian] people's volunteer corps has put up a strong resistance against the aggressors. Several Abkhaz militants have been killed.

Georgian units have restored their positions near the village of Kurcha in the Zugdidi Rayon. Abkhaz forces have been constructing defenses beyond the Inguri river. The situation in Zugdidi Rayon is normal on the whole.

Explosion on Roof of Independent TV Company

LD2603133594 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1100 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] At 0430 this morning an explosion occurred in Tbilisi on the roof of a six-story building that houses the Iberviziya independent television company.

At the Georgian interior minister's press center it was said that as a result, a satellite aerial was rendered inoperative and was blown from the roof onto the street.

Window panes in the building were broken. There are no casualties. The explosion is being investigated.

Explosion Termed 'Terrorist Act'

NC2603135494 Yerevan SNARK in English 1156 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, March 26 (SNARK)—At 5 a.m. March 26 an explosion took place in one of the Tbilisi districts. The roof of the "Iberviziya" independent TV Company, located on the Vazha-Shavela Avenue in downtown, was blown down.

As the head of the Georgian Home Affairs Ministry press-center Valerian Gogolashvili told SNARK, there were no victims, and the building of the TV company wasn't damaged. Gogolashvili characterized the accident as a terrorist act.

Series of terrorist acts in the capital of Georgia continue—there have been 4 of them over the last month. Gogolashvili reminded setting on fire of a secondary school, fire in the dwelling district Vacke, explosion in the building of Mkhedrioni headquarters.

As for today's case, it should be noted that the independent channel had broadcast an interview with the former Defence Minister Georgiy Karkarashvili a few days ago. The latter accused the current Security Minister Igor Giorgadze of spreading rumors claiming on his selling Sukhumi to Abkhazians for 72 thousand dollars.

Minister Claims 95% Favor Joining CIS

LD2603191594 Tbilisi IBERIA in Georgian 1530 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Tbilisi, 26 [Mar]—In the opinion of Georgian Security Minister Igor Giorgadze, the Georgian people have already made their choice regarding the CIS. In an interview granted to the ZAKAVKAZSKIYE VEDOMOSTI newspaper, Igor Giorgadze said that according to the information obtained by the Security Ministry, 98 to 99 percent of Tbilisi population and some 95 percent of the total population of Georgia supported Georgia's joining the CIS.

Estonia

Ostankino TV Cut Due to Contract Expiry, Debts

LD2803091094 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 0600 GMT 28 Mar 94

[Text] According to a government resolution, Estonian Telecom will today end relays of the Russian Ostankino State Radio and Television Company programs. The government resolution is due to both the contract expiry date and Ostankino's debt to Telecom. Government press representative Ain Saarna has said that Ostankino's debt to Estonian Telecom amounts to 185,000 German marks. Making allowances to viewers' requests, Telecom will continue to relay the Mexican television serial *Simply Maria*.

Zhirinovskiy Critical of Action Against Rozhok

WS2503202794 Tallinn BNS in English 1303 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 25, BNS—Persecution of the Russian Liberal Democratic Party [RLDP] representative in Estonia Pyotr Rozhok may put Estonia's statehood in peril, says RLDP leader Vladimir Zhirinovskiy.

Zhirinovskiy yesterday sent a letter to Estonian Ambassador to Russia Juri Kahn stating that "coercive measures and provocations against the well-known Russian defender of the law and RLDP activist" Pyotr Rozhok may bring about "unforeseen consequences" in relations between Estonia and Russia.

"Estonia's statehood, gained thanks to communists, may in the troubled times of the 20th century, if Russia's interests are disregarded, become an ordeal for Estonia. Provocations and pressure are not the right key in relations with a 150-million nation. Let the organizers of such actions think deeply about the possible consequences," Zhirinovskiy said in the letter.

The Estonian Security Police on March 24 seized Rozhok and took him to psychiatric expertise. After that the police, in the presence of the Russian vice consul, searched Rozhok's apartment. They confiscated five brochures published by the RLDP and a manuscript intended for publication "in a Russian-language newspaper," Rozhok told BNS.

Security Police Director General Juri Pihl told BNS investigation of Rozhok's case will soon be completed and the materials turned over to the court.

The Security Police on March 16 filed formal charges against the 55-year-old Rozhok under Article 72 of the Criminal Code, accusing him of "fanning ethnic and political hatred." Addressing a meeting of the Russian Citizens' Union of Narva on Jan. 18, Rozhok said Lennart Meri "is, at best, the president of Estonians, not of Estonia," since the Russian-speaking population did not take part in the presidential elections. The same applies to the parliament, he said. In an interview to the

Russian-language newspaper published in Sillamae, Rozhok claimed Estonia is an ancient Russian territory. In Rozhok's opinion, the retired Russian military living in Estonia should form armed units "to defend their honor and dignity" in case the authorities decide to deport them from Estonia.

Lifting of U.S. Embargo Will Not Effect Talks

LD2703163994 Moscow Mayak Radio Network in Russian 1530 GMT 27 Mar 94

[Text] Bill Clinton's decision to lift the embargo on arms and military equipment supplies to the Baltic countries will not affect the progress of Estonian-Russian talks, [Colonel] Ants Laaneots, Defense Forces chief of staff of the Republic of Estonia, told a RIA correspondent. The 18th round of the talks is to be held near Moscow on 5-6 April. The Defense Forces chief of staff expressed the view that differences over social guarantees for Russian Armed Forces pensioners will be overcome at these talks.

Kannik Reacts to Lifting of Embargo

WS2803120894 Tallinn EESTI RINGVAADE in English 21-23 Mar 94 Vol. 4 No. 12-2

[Received via Internet E-LIST]

[Text] Tallinn, March 23— Estonian Defence Minister Indrek Kannik said that Tuesday's [22 March] decision by the U.S. President Mr. Clinton, opens to Estonia a wider market for buying defence equipment. "Restrictions on arms sales have been quite strong so far," he said. "Also countries that have been politically close to us and with whom we are cooperating closely for integration with Europe have not been ready to sell us weapons," the Defence Minister said. Estonia has only bought weapons from Israel, Romania and China. Minister Kannik expressed hope that other countries will follow the example of United States and lift their arms sales restrictions. U.S. President Bill Clinton on Tuesday lifted the embargo on arms sales to the three Baltic states, and to Bulgaria, Romania and Albania. A memorandum from the U.S. President to the Secretary of State says that "furnishing of defence articles and services to the governments of ... Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania will strengthen the security of the United States and promote world peace."

British Official Urges 'Magnanimity' to Russians

WS2803094194 Tallinn BNS in English 2023 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 25, BNS—Despite the fact that the structure of Estonia's population was purposefully changed in the last 50 years, Estonia and its citizens should show magnanimity to ethnic Russians, said British Foreign Office Secretary of State Douglas Hogg in an interview to the Tallinn-based PUHAPAEVA-LEHT newspaper.

In Hogg's opinion, non-integration of Russians into the Estonian society may bring about an extremely dangerous situation.

Estonia needs to map out a policy to promote the integration of all people who want to live here into Estonian society both politically and socially, Hogg said. "No society that wishes to remain stable can afford to keep a considerable part of the population deprived of political rights. This is a challenge which Estonia and Latvia alike face," Hogg said in the interview.

Commenting on the Baltic states' relations with NATO, the British diplomat said Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania should regard NATO's Partnership for Peace program as a stepping-stone to eventual membership in the alliance.

"It is impossible to say at present which nations will be admitted to NATO through this program, but certain states will definitely get the opportunity. Obviously you want to join NATO to avail yourself of its collective guarantees. However, NATO is at present not prepared to give such a guarantee, this is not NATO policy," Hogg said.

The British diplomat was skeptical about Russia's joining NATO.

"I find it very difficult to imagine how Russia could become a member of NATO in the near future," he said. "Russia can, of course, benefit from the Partnership for Peace program, which it hasn't signed on to yet, however."

Hogg considered the relations between Estonia and Great Britain to be very good. He affirmed that his country would like to see Estonia more firmly integrated into West Europe as its partner in free trade.

"A free-trade agreement may lead to Estonia's becoming a member of the European Union. I believe the negotiations on an association accord could begin already this year. However, it would be a mistake for the Baltic states to speed up the process of joining the European Union: they would come under pressure which their economies would be unable to withstand. After all, the economic regime of the nation is primarily characterized by lack of subsidies and a free market," was Hogg's opinion.

Hogg was among the first high-ranking Western diplomats to visit Estonia after it regained its independence in 1991.

PUHAPAEVALEHT interviewed Hogg last week in London. The interview will be published in tomorrow's issue of the newspaper.

Estonian Army To Buy Israeli Firearms

PM2403125794 Moscow KRASNAYA ZVEZDA in Russian 24 Mar 94 p 3

[Report by Valeriy Gromak: "More Weapons: Good and Varied Ones"]

[Text] Ants Laaneots, chief of main staff of the Estonian Defense Forces, has announced that in the future the Estonian army will be armed mainly with Israeli weapons meeting NATO standards and the Kaitseliit volunteer military organization will be armed with Soviet-produced weapons. In the army units the firearms caliber will mainly be 5.56 mm and 7.62 mm. The 7.62 mm machineguns bought in Israel will be installed on armored personnel carriers, the 23 mm automatic anti-aircraft guns will be used by the air defense forces. Laaneots said that these guns are the only type of Estonian Army weapon which does not meet NATO standards: The NATO countries use 20 mm automatic guns.

Kaitseliit will be armed with 7.62 Kalashnikov assault rifles and Israeli machineguns of the same caliber. In addition Kaitseliit will be provided with grenade throwers.

The police will switch to Israeli 9 mm "Mini-Uzi" pistols and the internal defense operational battalion will receive 5.45 mm Kalashnikov assault rifles. The Estonian border guards will also be equipped in part with Israeli weapons.

"This distribution of weapons is temporary," Ants Laaneots, chief of main staff of the Estonian Defense Forces, believes. "It is essential to set up the supply of power structures with spare parts and ammunition of NATO-model weapons."

Diplomatic Relations Established With Maldives

WS2503101294 Tallinn ETA in English 1903 GMT 24 Mar 94

["News Release"]

[Text] Tallinn, March 24—According to the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs press service, diplomatic relations were established between Estonia and Maldives, on March 22.

The corresponding joint documents were signed by Estonian permanent representative in UN Ambassador Ernst Jaakson and charge d'affaires of the Maldives permanent representation at the UN Ahmed Rasheed, in New York.

Around 900 Soldiers Said Remaining at Base

WS2503101794 Tallinn ETA in English 1741 GMT 24 Mar 94

["News Release"]

[Text] Tallinn, March 24—Around 900 Russian military are still in the former Soviet submarine training base at Paldiski, Juri Tikk, the Estonian government's representative, told ETA on Thursday [24 March].

The Russian military on Thursday handed over the list of officers, junior officers and servicemen stationed in Paldiski. The list is the basis for giving them temporary permits to stay in the town.

The registration of Russian military vehicles also started on Thursday.

On Tuesday, registration of local inhabitants started with the aim of determining the composition and number of inhabitants in the town largely inhabited by non-Estonian population and the Russian military.

As of Wednesday night, around 1,600 people had filled in the registration lists. The registration closes on Saturday.

On answering the question on dismantling the training nuclear reactors in Paldiski, Tikk declined some reports that the process was to start around April 5-7, at the time of another round of Estonian-Russian negotiations. He said, however, that the dismantling would begin in April, but the date had not been fixed.

Government Prepares for Scrapping of Reactors

LD2503132594 Tallinn Radio Tallinn Network in Estonian 1100 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] According to government instructions, several ministries must ensure preparations for the scrapping of the nuclear reactors located at the Russian Federation's naval training center for nuclear submarine crews at Paldiski [near Tallinn], as reported to ETA [Estonian Telegraph Agency] by the government press service.

The Environment Ministry must ensure that radiation levels are constantly monitored, the Economics Ministry must ensure an uninterrupted supply of electricity for the removal of nuclear fuel and radioactive materials, the Interior Ministry must, according to the government instructions, ensure security on site and necessary resources in case of fire and for the evacuation of the population in case of a threat of radiation. The Social Affairs Ministry will be responsible for medical assistance and the Ministry for Roads and Communications for the safe and unimpeded rail passage for the containers carrying nuclear fuel. The Foreign Ministry must draft a basic agreement on the work on scrapping of the nuclear reactors and related issues. The Interior Ministry will be coordinating these tasks; it must draw up a general plan for the removal of nuclear fuel from the nuclear reactors by 28 March. By today [25 March], all the above ministries must present their recommendations to the Interior Ministry on the expenses budget on the scrapping of the nuclear reactors.

Negotiations on Troop Pullout Progressing

WS2803121194 Tallinn EESTI RINGVAADE in English 21-23 March 94 Vol. 4 No. 12-2

[Received via Internet E-LIST]

[Text] Tallinn, March 22— While negotiations for the removal of Russian troops from Estonia appear to have stalled, negotiations for the removal of the nuclear reactor in Paldiski have proceeded well. The next step in the removal is the Estonian Government's decision to give permission for extra Russian military personnel to come to the former Russian naval base town of Paldiski for the dismantling of the two nuclear training reactors located there. Prime Minister Mart Laar said after a government meeting that the permit had been issued for "a small group of military." Mr. Laar said "no problems or obstacles" with Russia had emerged over the issue of the nuclear reactors' removal.

Registration of Paldiski Residents To End Soon

WS2803103994 Tallinn BNS in English 1648 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] Tallinn, Mar 26, BNS—Estonian officials in Paldiski had by Friday [25 March] night registered 3,554 residents of the town, special representative of the government in Paldiski Juri Tikk told BNS. The number allows to assume that most of Paldiski's civilian residents will turn up for registration.

Registration of the population began March 22 and is scheduled to be completed at 4 p.m. today. Tikk didn't rule out that the registration stations may stay open longer.

At present about 250 Estonian citizens and 4,000 civilian non-citizens live in Paldiski. Besides, an estimated 800 to 1,000 Russian military serve there.

Russian military command presented the day before yesterday a list of officers and soldiers in Paldiski, which included 891 names. Some 600 of them are permanently stationed in the town and are expected to leave by Aug. 31, the rest are specialists and technical personnel brought in to dismantle the two nuclear reactors at the Russian naval training base.

The majority of the Russian military living in Paldiski serve in the navy, but some officers of the Tallinn-based 144th motorized rifle division also reside in the town. Russian military authorities promised to present their list on March 29, Tikk told BNS.

Latvia

President Ulmanis Receives Letter From Yeltsin

LD2503171194 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1448 GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 36: Compiled by Sergey Logachev, Andrey Petrovskiy, edited by Vladimir Shishlin]

[Text] President Guntis Ulmanis received Monday a letter from Boris Yeltsin, in which the Russian president confirms his readiness to meet in Moscow to discuss

bilateral relations. The letter was handed over to Ulmanis by Russian Ambassador in Latvia Aleksandr Rannikh.

A spokesman for the president's administration told Interfax that the letter says that now there is an opportunity, through a summit dialogue, to improve the relations between Latvia and Russia, to strengthen relations in the political, economic and social spheres.

In the letter Yeltsin outlines his view on the present legal status of the Russian-speaking population in Latvia and assesses the recent round of the Russian-Latvian negotiations that completed in Jurmala last week. IF Note: Guntis Ulmanis planned to visit Moscow late in 1993 and postponed the visit several times. Early this year his visit did not take place either, though it was planned. The president said this took place partially owing to the incident of January 10 in Riga, when two Russian general were arrested and there were sharp statements against the Baltic countries and Latvia in particular from Russian Foreign Minister Andrey Kozyrev and other Russian politicians.

Action Plan for NATO 'Partnership' Almost Ready

WS2503203294 Tallinn BNS in English 0956 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 25, BNS—The Latvian Government's working party will soon finish work at proposals for participation in NATO's Partnership for Peace program, said Justice Minister Egils Levits, who heads the group.

The Defense Ministry's specialists have completed the military part of the document which provides to near the structure of the Latvian Army and the Home Guard to NATO standards.

Latvia also wants to send the National Armed Forces to joint exercises of NATO countries.

The Foreign Ministry officials are still working at the political part of the document which outlines consultations between Latvia and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

This part of the plan focuses on consultations in case Latvia faces foreign threat, said Levits.

Latvia wishes to feel the political presence of NATO in the Baltic region. Consequently, the proposals foresee to open a NATO information bureau in Latvia.

The working party will discuss the document with Danish Ambassador Kirsten Mallin Biering, who is also NATO's representative in Latvia, before sending it to Brussels.

The Defense Ministry also pledges to soon unveil calculations on the costs of participating in the NATO partner plan, Levits said.

As reported, the 16-nation alliance adopted the Partnership for Peace program during its Jan. 11 summit in Brussels. The program entitles the former Warsaw pact foes to receive military and political consultations. It could also become an avenue to eventual, but not obligatory, NATO membership of East European and former Soviet countries. Latvia signed up to the program Feb. 14.

Latvia plans to become member of the European Union around the year 2000. Consequently, Latvia could gain NATO membership a little later, Levits prognosticated.

Protocols To Be Signed With Central Asian States

WS2503202994 Tallinn BNS in English 0956 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Riga, Mar 25, BNS—A Latvian Government delegation toured Central Asian countries March 9-23 and signed a series of trade cooperation protocols for 1994, said Aivars Gulbis, a spokesman for the Economics Ministry.

Earlier, Latvia concluded interstate trade agreements with Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan which provide that concrete yearly supplies are coordinated by annual protocols. The procedure is needed because the Central Asian countries still practice Soviet-era system of centralized distribution of material resources.

Under the protocols, Tajikistan will send Latvia aluminum, cotton, tobacco and chemicals while Latvia will deliver radio and telephone apparatuses and other consumer goods, said Gulbis.

Turkmenistan will supply the Baltic country with cotton, wool and vegetable oil and receive Latvian mini buses, machinery, consumer goods and food stuffs.

Latvia will also buy Uzbek metal alloys, zinc and metal working facilities. The Uzbek Government plans to increase its exports through Latvian ports.

In 1993, Latvia's export to Uzbekistan was 0.86 percent of the total exports while Uzbek import made up 0.11 percent of the total Latvian imports. The Latvian trade balance with Turkmenistan was 1.16 percent in export and 0.09 in import, with Tajikistan—0.15 percent in export and 0.05 percent in import.

Osis Visiting Sweden; Bank Agreement Reached

LD2403224594 Riga Radio Riga Network in Latvian 2100 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] At the invitation of the Swedish Ministry of Finance, Latvian Finance Minister Uldis Osis is visiting Sweden. The purpose of the visit is that he acquaint himself with other countries' financial systems, because in Latvia a reform of the budget system is envisaged, with changes in the drafting of the budget, confirming [word indistinct] and monitoring its implementation.

Osis has already met Sweden's Finance Minister Anne Wibbe, Budget Director Joergen Holmquist, and the parliamentary finance commission. Uldis Osis also visited the Stockholm stock exchange. During his visit, agreement was reached whereby Sweden will provide assistance in training Latvian specialists. It was also confirmed that Sweden is prepared to assign \$10 million to improve the Latvian banks' system of operation. The recipients of this money will be the Latvian Universal Bank and the Latvian Savings Bank.

Lithuania

Christopher Lauds Lithuanian-Polish Ties

WS2803105394 Vilnius ELTA in English 1910 GMT
25 Mar 94

[From "News Bulletin" No. 465]

[Text] Vilnius, March 25, ELTA—Lithuanian Foreign Minister Povilas Gylys received a telegram from U.S. State Secretary Warren Christopher in which congratulations were expressed for Lithuanian and Polish foreign ministers on signing the good neighbourhood treaty.

The telegram says that hopefully the treaty will become the background of cooperation between Lithuania and Poland and will help to achieve stability and harmony in the region. This document confirms that the relations will be developed between two equal partners.

This sets a good example for the whole world, the countries of the European Security and Cooperation Conference in particular.

Despite the complexity of the issues considered, Lithuanian determination to achieve the pragmatic compromises determined the success of the negotiations, the telegram says.

Poland's Olechowski on Bilateral Treaty, Policy

WS2503153294 Vilnius TIESA in Lithuanian
18 Mar 94 No. 53 p 3

[Interview with Polish Foreign Minister Andrzej Olechowski by an ELTA correspondent in Warsaw; date not given: "A New Stage in Relations"]

[Text] [ELTA]Mister Minister, the initialing of the Lithuanian-Polish treaty is scheduled to take place on 18 March in Warsaw. How do you assess this fact?

[Olechowski] It is very important that negotiations on the bilateral treaty are over. It will be possible not only to begin a new stage in Lithuanian-Polish relations but also to remove the last formal obstacle hampering Poland's active foreign policy toward its Eastern neighbors. Lithuania is the only neighbor with whom we have no principal document signed. I will remind everyone that Poland began to draft the treaty in March 1992—exactly two years ago. However, the problem of disbanding the

self-governments in Vilnius and Salcininkay regions, mostly populated by the Poles, arose then. We submitted our draft treaty to Lithuania on 13 January 1993, while the Lithuanians presented their version last June. It is then that the true negotiations began.

[ELTA]Thus far, the contents of the treaty have remained unknown. However, there are people both in Lithuania and Poland who criticize this document. Some of them are dissatisfied with the absence of General L. Zeligowski's name in the treaty, while others—with the fact that the treaty does not protect the rights of the Polish minority in Lithuania. What is your view?

[Olechowski] I have also heard different opinions. Speaking about the mention of General L. Zeligowski's name in the treaty, Poland has consistently opposed the assessment of historical events. We believe that the complicated historical relations between Lithuania and Poland must be a matter of research and disputes of professional historians. The treaty is an interstate document. It must serve as the basis for developing our relations. These are two different issues that must not be confused.

Protecting the rights of our ethnic minorities, we followed this principle—to seek the integration of the Polish minority as Lithuanian citizens by preserving the cultural and linguistic autonomy and respecting minority rights. I am convinced that emotions over the secrecy of the text will subside after the treaty is publicized, and the text will be analyzed calmly.

[ELTA]Lithuania is the last country among Poland's neighbors with which the latter has no interstate agreement signed. One Polish social figure has said that Lithuania is the key to Poland's Eastern policy, while Ukraine is its foundation. Do you share this opinion?

[Olechowski] Both states play an important role in Poland's Eastern policy, because they, as Russia and Belarus, are our neighbors. Poland is interested in their political stability and in consistent changes that bring them closer to European structures. We hope that Poland's cooperation with Lithuania and Ukraine will develop further in the "Partnership for Peace" program.

[ELTA]What are the key trends of your Eastern policy?

[Olechowski] Seeking a successful execution of its foreign policy, Poland must stress the key priorities. For well-known reasons, these are primarily our relations with neighbors. Our Eastern policy must focus on three principal directions: To expand political and economic contacts with Russia and Ukraine, as well as with Belarus, Moldova, and Kazakhstan; to seek political and military stability in the region; and to upgrade the application of possibilities for economic cooperation.

[ELTA]What will the first moves be after signing the Lithuanian-Polish interstate treaty?

[Olechowski] First of all, we must make our economic relations more intensive. To this aim, we would like to

hold a roundtable meeting soon and discuss economic issues. We expect mutual benefit from this.

We will also seek to resolve specific problems between our two countries. I would ascribe the registration of the Polish Home Army Veterans' Club in Lithuania as one of the most important issues. Moreover, we must clear up the problems concerning the property of Polish prewar social organizations in Vilnius.

[ELTA]Thank you for the interview.

Russia's Unconditional CE Admission Opposed

LD2603100294 Vilnius Radio Vilnius International
Service in Lithuanian 2200 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Kazys Bobelis, member of the Lithuanian Seimas delegation in the Council of Europe [CE] was against privileges for Russia in admitting it to that international organization.

At a meeting of the Human Rights Committee of the Council of Europe in Paris last week, Bobelis, together with many representatives of other countries, voted against the initiative of Great Britain to admit Russia without some essential preliminary conditions. According to the Lithuanian representative, Russia's admission to the Council of Europe is so far being hindered for several reasons, the most important of them being the deployment of the Army in foreign countries.

At the meeting of the committee, Bobelis, together with the Romanian, Polish, and Turkish representatives, did not support the Swedish initiative to abolish the death sentence in all states of the European Council. Although, according to him, Lithuania does not have an official policy on this issue, in his opinion, it is too early for the Lithuanians to assume such responsibility.

Bobelis, who is chairman of the Seimas Foreign Affairs Committee, complained at a news conference on Friday [25 March] of poor relations with the foreign policy planners at the presidential office. He stated that the Foreign Affairs Committee was not supporting the policy of Justas Paleckis, the presidential adviser on foreign policy. He called this policy isolationist.

Transit, Visa Accord Reached With Kaliningrad

WS2503202894 Tallinn BNS in English 1303 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Kaliningrad, Russia, Mar 25, BNS—Lithuanian and Kaliningrad region officials on Thursday [24 March] agreed on terms of Russian automobile transit through Lithuanian territory, said members of a Lithuanian working group, headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Vladislovas Domarkas.

Yuri Matochkin, head of the region's administration, suggested to simplify transit document regulations to

firms and organizations that would be vouched for by the Kaliningrad administration. The Lithuanian side accepted the proposal.

Lithuania and the region also agreed to put off for three months the introduction of Lithuanian visas for Kaliningrad residents because the region is technically unprepared to make special passport inserts for travel through Lithuanian territory.

Speaker: Relations With Russia Moving Too Slowly

LD2503164794 Moscow INTERFAX in English 1448 GMT 25 Mar 94

[From the "Presidential Bulletin" feature No. 36 (526) compiled by Sergey Logachev, Andrey Petrovskiy; edited by Vladimir Shishlikn]

[Text] Parliament speaker Ceslovas Juršenas believes that though there is progress in the relationships between Lithuania and Russia, they are too slow. Addressing in Vilnius a news conference he said that the withdrawal from Lithuania of the Russian troops and the signing of the trade and economic agreements helped develop bilateral cooperation. Juršenas voiced regret that some agreements signed by prime ministers, including those on bilateral trade, are not being implemented.

The speaker believes that the two sides should not only comply with the documents, they should more dynamically discuss the urgent problems. He believes the delay in solving some problems may play into the hands of the politicians who are trying hard to present Russia as the main source of threats and dangers.

Speaking about the internal situation in Lithuania, Juršenas said that it was stabilizing and this year there are chances to improve it.

However, the prospect for stabilization of the domestic situation, said the speaker, do not suit the interests of the extreme right-wing opposition, which does all it can to put Lithuania into a distress situation.

The speaker reminded about the abortive strike declared by farmers ten days ago.

Juršenas described as an attempt to deteriorate the political atmosphere the recent call by four opposition factions in parliament to hold a referendum on early elections, "no doubt, these attempts will be futile and the parliament will work until its powers expire in the autumn of 1996.

Sweden Confirms Ignalina Station Aid To Continue

LD2503155394 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1400 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] The Swedish Embassy in Vilnius has assured that its government does not stop technical assistance to the Ignalina nuclear power station.

According to the embassy statement made public today, information published recently in the Lithuanian mass information media might create an impression that Sweden was stopping its entire assistance to the Ignalina nuclear power station because of legal problems with Belarus. This is not true.

According to the statement by the Swedish Embassy, the Swedish Government has allocated about 120 million Swedish kroner to finance 20 various projects linked with the Ignalina nuclear power station. Nineteen of these projects are not influenced by the fact that Belarus has so far failed to sign the Vienna convention on responsibility for nuclear accidents and pass corresponding laws. The project influenced by the Belarusian stance is valued at about 10 million Swedish kroner. The Swedish Embassy hopes that Belarus will eliminate legal obstacles and this project, important to the reactor, will be soon fulfilled.

Official: Crime, No Politics in Selma Scandal

WS2503203294 Tallinn BNS in English 0956 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 25, BNS—Attempts are made to transform a simple crime into politics, MP [member of parliament] Vytautas Petkevicius, chairman of the Lithuanian parliament's National Security Committee, said about the arrest of a Lithuanian businessman whose company built houses for the Russian military in the Kaliningrad region.

Vladas Laurinavicius, president of the Kaunas-based Selma association, was arrested last week when over 40 searches were carried out in apartments of former and present Defense Ministry employees. Officials said the measure was taken to further investigate the purchase of weapons for Lithuania's defense forces in 1992-93.

"There is and will be no influence on the troop withdrawal from Latvia and Estonia, or construction work in Kaliningrad. State affairs must not be mixed with personal matters," Petkevicius said at a press conference Thursday [24 March].

The lawmaker emphasized that Selma is not a Lithuanian organization since last September, and law experts will have to find out how the company managed to continue its existence in Lithuania without paying taxes.

In Petkevicius' opinion, the case started in the fall of 1992 when Lithuanian Provisional Money, also called talonas, was introduced instead of Soviet rubles. The lawmaker said around 2 million rubles were then taken out to the Kaliningrad region at that time. He said the money was escorted by certain services but did not specify them. "This is investigated by the prosecutor's offices of both countries."

Petkevicius said it is necessary to find 12 million lits and several million dollars that disappeared in the weapons deal. He said the prosecutor's office established that

those who directly participated in purchasing weapons have huge sums at their disposal now.

Petkevicius said he was surprised by ex-Defense Minister Audrius Butkevicius stormy reaction to Selma president's arrest, because the former minister is not mentioned in the investigation carried out by the parliament's economic crimes commission.

The lawmaker noted that various companies acted as mediators in the weapons deal. He mentioned a case when Russian helicopters, offered for 800,000 U.S. dollars per unit, were later purchased for 1,200,000 each, and the price difference went to fictitious firms.

Petkevicius said the Russian prosecutor's office is also interested in the case because "many facts available to Lithuanian and Russian prosecutor's offices coincide."

President Visits Former Soviet Army Bases

WS2503153194 Vilnius TIESA in Lithuanian 19 Mar 94 No. 54 p 1

[Report attributed to ELTA: "President Visited Military Bases"]

[Text] On 18 March, President A. Brazauskas, along with V. Petkevicius, chairman of the Seimas [parliament] National Security Committee, National Defense Minister L. Linkevicius, and other officials, visited the former Russian Army bases and inspected the condition of the transferred facilities.

First of all, the delegation visited the Rukla base in the Jonava region. "There are lots of buildings, but they are used ineffectively," said the president. Previously, the base used to house 12,000 servicemen, while now there are only several hundred soldiers—the first field army motorized battalion "Gelezinis Vilkas" [Iron Wolf]. An opinion was voiced that Rukla could become the key Army training base and a center for motorized training. The base has comfortable vacant apartments which could accommodate servicemen coming for training.

In the Panevezys region, A. Brazauskas and his accompanying delegation showed interest in the Pajuoste base. They discussed ways of better utilizing its facilities. The president said that it would be our key air base.

In the Siauliai region, the president visited the military airport in Zokniai.

Premier Claims Government First To Curb Inflation

WS2803120494 Vilnius ELTA in Lithuanian 1207 GMT 25 Mar 94

[Text] On Thursday [17 March] evening, Prime Minister Adolfas Slezevicius met with foreign mass media journalists accredited in Lithuania.

Nearly a year ago—on 31 March—the Seimas [parliament] approved the program of the sixth Lithuanian

Government headed by A. Slezevicius. The prime minister noted that his cabinet was the first among the six governments to prepare its program and curb inflation which was 1,162 and 189 percent in 1992 and 1993, respectively. The government will seek that the inflation rate does not exceed 50 percent in 1994 (4.8 and 2.9 percent in January and February). According to A. Slezevicius, the sixth government was the most resolute in liberalizing prices: About 80 percent of all prices are regulated by the market. The government controls only prices for energy, transportation, and communications.

However, the key unresolved problems for the current government are mutual debts and settlements of enterprises and organizations, as well as the inefficient collection of taxes and work of the economic police, prevention of contraband, land reform and credits, the construction of the oil terminal and the pumped-storage electric power station in Kruonis, and the drafting of the national transportation program. The prime minister claimed that even though the criminal situation has stabilized, it still remains complicated. Incidentally, the crime rate has dropped by 17 percent over the first two months of this year against the same period of last year, and it is the lowest among all neighboring states.

Premier on Increased Power Prices, Pensions

WS2503091494 Tallinn BNS in English 1913 GMT 24 Mar 94

[Text] Vilnius, Mar 24, BNS—Lithuanian Premier Adolfas Slezevicius announced the government's intention to increase electricity and gas prices to individual consumers, and also to raise pensions and salaries to employees of state institutions.

At a press conference Thursday [24 March], the premier said budget receipts were too small lately to increase salaries and pensions, however the Finance Ministry and the Ministry of Social Security were commissioned this week to consider possibilities to increase payments April 1. "The step is very hard in some aspects, especially considering preparations for the inevitable negative consequences of introducing the value-added tax."

The government increased budget salaries and pensions nine times in 1993 and once this year.

The premier said the new gas and electricity prices will most probably be introduced when the heating season ends.

Slezevicius said electricity prices must be increased because the Ignalina nuclear power plant has to use much more expensive nuclear fuel cartridges. One cartridge costs 60,000 U.S. dollars and the plant needs 90 million dollars a year, he said. Slezevicius said electricity prices remained stable for nearly a year. In his words, electricity bills now make up only an insignificant part of an average family budget.

The press conference that Slezevicius attended was devoted to a continuing political dispute over the appointment of Vytautas Skuodis to head the Lithuanian genocide investigation center.

The premier said he will "initiate" an investigation of facts suggesting that documents were stolen from the former KGB building in Vilnius in 1991-1992. "This of course should have been done earlier, but it is better to do it now than never."

New Left-Wing Party Formed at Congress

LD2603142994 Vilnius Radio Vilnius Network in Lithuanian 1300 GMT 26 Mar 94

[Text] A constituent congress of Lithuanian left wingers is taking place in Vilnius today. What kind of movement this is and what are its aims? Here is an interview with one of its leaders, Albinas Visockas.

[Begin recording] [Visockas] After the Landsbergis group was removed from power by the Lithuanian nation and the Democratic Labor Party [DLP] came to power we pinned great hopes on the future. Unfortunately, not all our hopes have been justified. A group of people, including former members of the DLP and non-party people, decided that it was essential to form a new, resolute, left-wing, workers' party that would represent the strata of the population most frustrated in the material sense. After a year of preparation, we have today a constituent congress of such a resolute, left-wing, workers' party.

[Unidentified correspondent] But to recall our recent past, the communists maintained that they represented the interests of the workers—above all, the interests of the working class and peasants. May it not happen that you will follow the same path?

[Visockas] Of course, but the difference is that this time the initiative came from below, that is, among the initiators of this party are workers, unemployed, tractor drivers, housewives, and other strata of the population who possess very little.

[Correspondent] What social group do you yourself represent?

[Visockas] I am a worker, although I have higher education. I consider that this was the fate of many people in Lithuania after competent and professional persons were removed from all offices and institutions by the Landsbergis group. There are such people. I am a worker, my comrades are also—some of them are night watchmen, some of them cleaners, etc. But we are very glad that we have managed to acquire the initial rather large intellectual potential, that is, there are doctors of sciences, professors, candidates of sciences, lecturers in our party. Thus there is a good basis for the formation of the party.

[Correspondent] Do you intend to cooperate with other parties in Lithuania, including such public movements as the Workers' Union?

[Visockas] Yes, we intend to cooperate with all parties and movements that will not look down at us, that wish to cooperate, but we are not going to be subserviant. We have no inferiority complex. We do not feel any guilt, we are equal to other political parties and movements in Lithuania.

[Correspondent] Your movement or party is of a socialist orientation?

[Visockas] Yes.

[Correspondent] How many persons holding the same views as you are there?

[Visockas]

I can say exactly. We have 429 party members. But they are those who have decided. Those who will decide after the congress and in the following months, I think that there will be very many of them. [end recording]